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CALIFORNIA Journal

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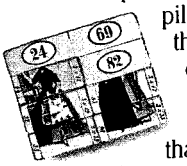

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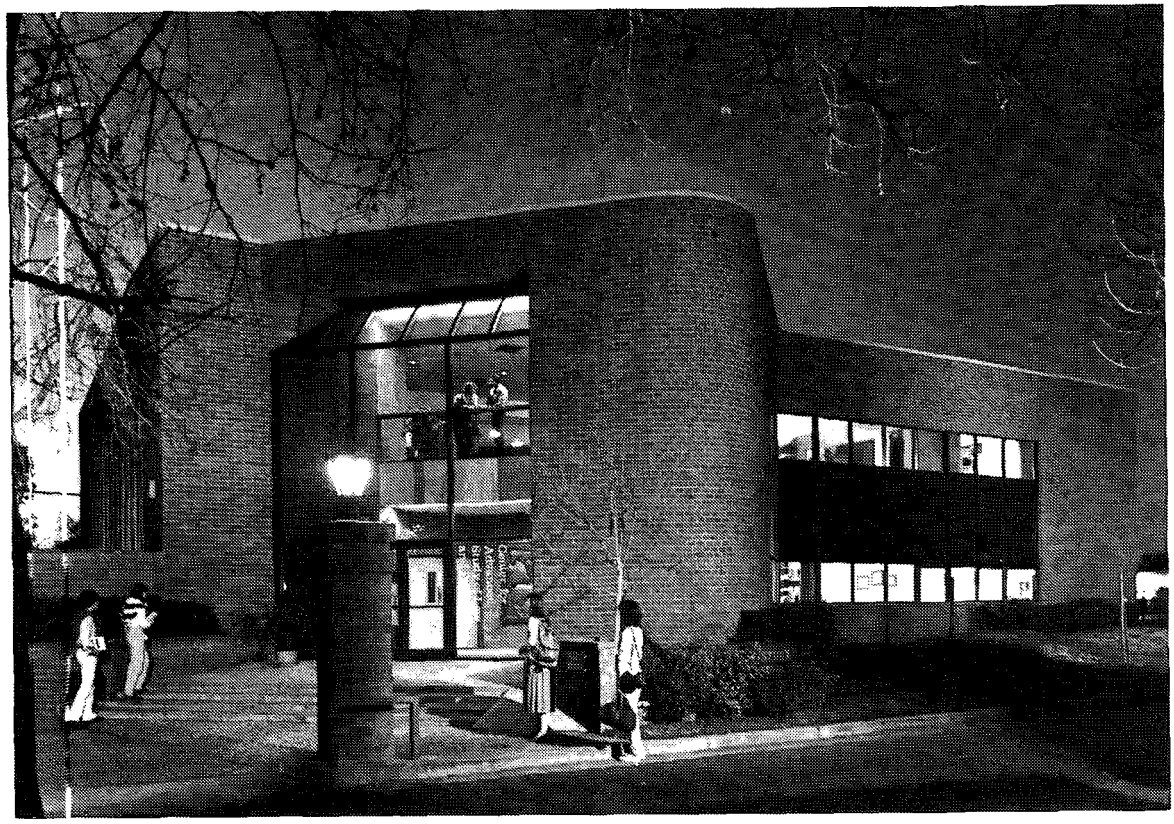

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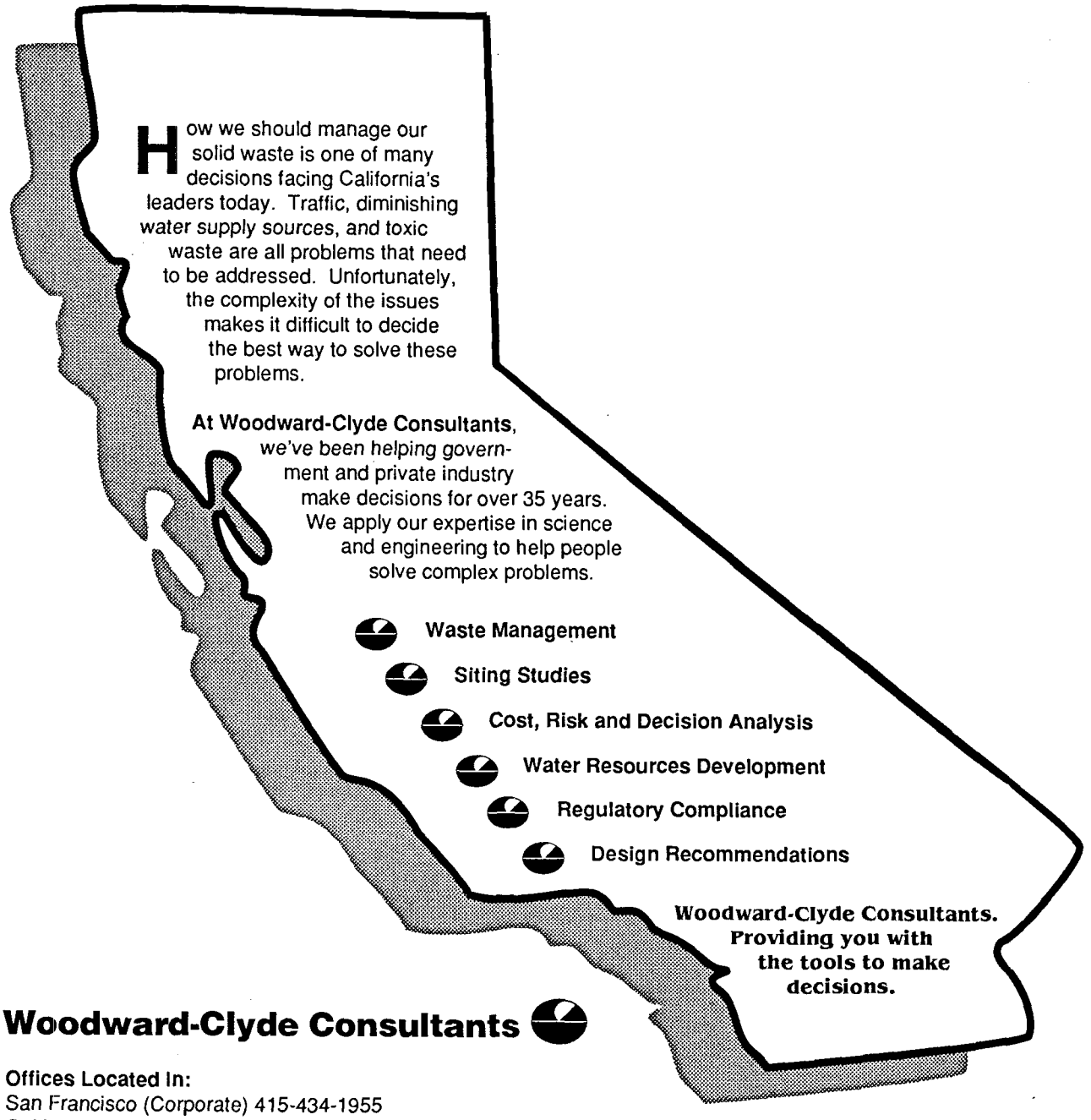

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CALIFORNIA Journal

VOLUME XIX, NUMBER 3 MARCH 1988

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Once again, the controversy over who controls water in California is bubbling to the surface. By Richard Zeiger

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The Democratic Party in Orange County is alive, not very well, and looking foward to the post-Reagan era. By Tom Waldman

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California's classroom of the future will be decidedly high tech. The question is: How do we get there from here? By A.G. Block

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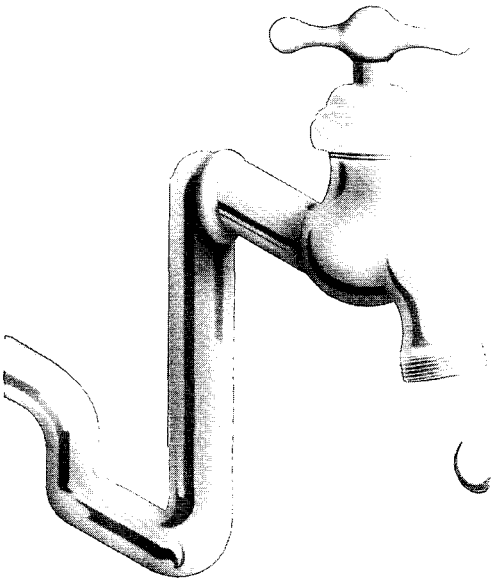

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UP FRONT

Tape players? We don't need no stinkin' tape players. The U.S. Air Force, embroiled in controversy over years of dumping toxic waste in and around Sacramento, has a McClellan (Air Force Base) Task Force looking into the problem. The Task Force holds regular meetings which are recorded on tape, and some folks thought those tapes ought to be available to the public. The Air Force finally agreed, and the tapes can now be heard at two Sacramento-area libraries and at McClellan's public affairs office. Well, sort of. According to a newsletter published by the air base, "tapes of Task Force meetings may not be checked out and the libraries are not equipped with tape players."

Your assignment for today is to make sense of the following memo from the Department of Water Resources: "The formula for calculating the fee is specified in Water Code, Section 6305. It requires that where the actual construction cost of a dam exceeds the estimated cost by more than 15 percent, a further fee must be collected by the department before it may give its final approval. The further fee must be 115 percent of the amount by which the original fee was less than it would have been if it had been calculated on the actual cost of the dam and reservoir."

It only looked like the San Francisco Giants went out of their way for Assemblywoman Jackie Speier when team members visited the state Capitol last month. Giants' catcher Bob Brenly presented the South San Francisco Democrat with a team jersey adorned with her district number — 19 — and "Speier" emblazoned across the back of the uniform. "You shouldn't have done it," Speier said. Don't worry; they didn't. The uniform belonged to Giants' infielder Chris Speier (no relation to the lawmaker).

Off the dime. Contra Costa County Supervisor Sunne Wright McPeak, a Democrat, has decided to take on veteran Democratic state Senator Dan Boatwright in this June's primary. McPeak's political career has been in neutral since 1982 when *California Journal* included her among the state's most promising young politicians. Last November, when we compiled a new list of up-and-comers, McPeak was assigned to the also-ran category, mostly because all her roads to political glory seemed blocked by Democratic incumbents — notably Boatwright. McPeak faces an uphill struggle against the incumbent, who reportedly has been promised the support of old foe David Roberti. Plus, Boatwright has a sizeable warchest on hand for the campaign. McPeak will have a harder scramble for money, although she held a fund raiser recently in Walnut Creek that featured none other than Attorney General John Van de Kamp. Did Van de Kamp's appearance signal an endorsement? We're just old chums from 'way back, insisted McPeak. She doesn't know if Van de Kamp will also do a fund raiser for Boatwright.

State Senator Becky Morgan, a Los Altos Hills Republican, wants to restore the Stanford House in Sacramento for use as a conference center and a state-run hotel for visiting dignitaries — sort of a California version of Blair House, the Washington, D.C. residence used to accommodate visiting heads of state. Well, it's a fine idea to have some posh old relic in which to host visiting dignitaries, but wouldn't it be nice to have an official residence for the governor of California? George Deukmejian currently lives in a private house in a section of Sacramento that is about 15 to 20 minutes from the Capitol. The Stanford House is located a block from his Capitol office. If taxpayers are going to pony up to renovate the Stanford House, why not use it for the governor and let visitors stay at a downtown hotel?

Since the last few Super Bowls have been routs, the Republican National Committee probably figured no one would care if its minions began making fund-raising calls with two minutes left in the game. They cared, especially one party loyalist from Azusa. "I wonder how much damage they may have done to our cause with those calls?" he thought. None in Denver where Broncos' fans were probably eager for an excuse to turn off the 42-10 pummeling Denver received from the Washington Redskins.

(John Dadian, Glendale)

Pity the poor Defense Department. After all those nasty budget cuts, Graham-Rudman imperatives, and revelations about overspending for widgets, the department can't even afford a $1.95 authorization for a *California Journal Roster and Government Guide*. Why else would the Presidio's Judge Advocate in San Francisco request a free copy? Let's see, one *Roster* costs about as much as a medium-sized screwdriver. We'll send them a *Roster*, plus a bill for $3352.89.

Barry Keene, the Senate's majority leader, sweats out a lot of mornings on the Nautilus circuit at a Sacramento health club. But he ought to put in a little time on the basketball court as well. During a recent NBA game between the Sacramento Kings and Chicago Bulls, Keene was given two chances to make one free throw and thereby win a round of tacos for every fan seated in his section of the arena. Both of Keene's efforts clanged off the front of the rim, earning the Benicia lawmaker a lusty round of boos.

You are what you wear. The Mardi Gras thrown each year by Capitol Network — a party-loving group of women lobbyists, legislators and staffers — has turned into one of the social events of the year in a town whose main social activity seems to be the fund raiser. The costumes have gotten more lavish with each event. Assemblywoman Sunny Mojonnier, one of the founders of the group, wore Victorian dresses of violet and white; her colleague Cathy Wright was dressed from the Martha Washington era. Assemblyman Bill Leonard was a surfer in baggies, and Senator Jim Ellis was dressed as an old miner. Senator Diane Watson was a silver flapper; and Assemblyman Dave Kelley was in Riverside County rococo, leather vest and boots. As might be expected, Speaker Willie Brown was the most resplendent of the lawmakers. He came dressed as a Confederate army officer accompanied by his pro tem, Mike Roos, who was in a Union officer's outfit. Mojonnier said the event has be-

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come so popular it would be held in larger quarters next year so more people could attend. Also, she said the press would be invited. But take note, Sunny: No matter what they wear, the press always comes dressed as . . . the press.

Rappin' Sam, otherwise known as Democratic Assemblyman Sam Farr of Carmel, made an unusual plea for votes on a bill protecting birds of prey (raptors):

You say you want a hawk that flap, flap, flaps
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Peregrins, falcons, birds of prey
that's the kind of bird you want to own today.
To buy a bird is more than show and tell
do it wrong and go to raptor hell.
Break the rules, and you'll see
ya better not mess with the D.F.G.
It's not easy to own a raptor
it's a lot more than pursuit and capture.
You gotta feed it, fly it, wash it, dry it
if you wanna even and buy it.
19-60 is the bill,
vote for it and give me a thrill.
We're not talkin' pie in the sky.
this bill will fly with your aye.
We're talkin' peregrins, falcons, birds of prey;
that's the kind of bird we're tryin' to save today.

The bill passed 66-4.

Come across a blurb lately that's nosy, newsy or smart-alecky about California government, politics or politicians? Share it with the Journal. *We pay up to $25 for entertaining tidbits published in "Up Front." so rush your items to Up Front, 1714 Capitol Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95814. Sorry, submissions cannot be returned.*

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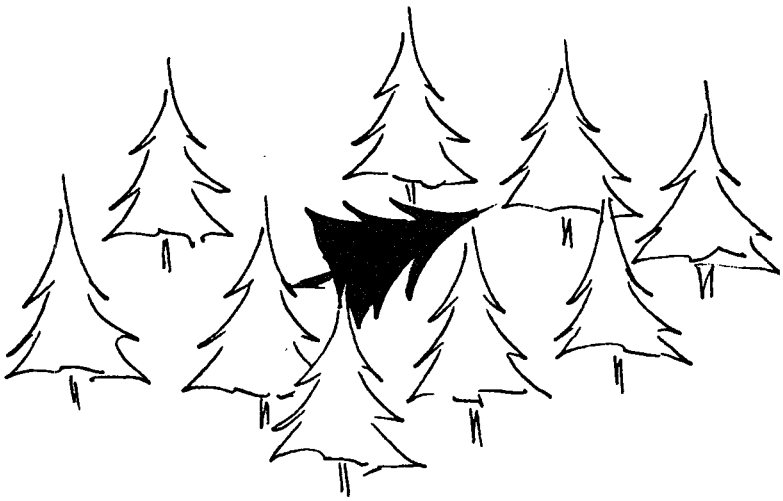

A tree falls in the forest

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ROSTRUM

Redevelopment

The article on redevelopment (see *CJ*, January 1988) correctly states that low-population cities are likely to be a feature on the California local-government scene for the forseeable future. A constitutional amendment to abolish them is highly unlikely. However, the possibility that such a city might consolidate with its opposite number — a community with lots of people but a very low tax base — might be a more realistic political possibility. Take, for example, the community of East Los Angeles and the City of Commerce. Without their own city agencies, the many residents of unincorporated East Los Angeles have often felt their needs have not been adequately provided with local government services. Just to the south of them, the relatively few residents of Commerce have services in abundance. Would a merger even the scales?

ALEXANDER POPE
Los Angeles

Your article on small cities with big ambitions (see "Redevelopment," *CJ*, January 1988) was received with great interest. Recently, Emeryville has experienced a renaissance created by its excellent location at the eastern anchorage of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, favorable real estate values resulting from the old industries dying out or leaving town, their replacement by biotechnology firms, and an aggressive redevelopment program. In the past four years, Emeryville has added 1300 new dwelling units to its housing stock, thereby doubling its population. Contrary to the inference in your article, Emeryville does not unfairly raid neighboring communities for development "plums" to the detriment of its schools and other agencies that rely on property taxes. Emeryville recently adopted a new redevelopment project that contemplates the joint participation of Oakland, its neighbor to the south, and which was hailed by Alameda County officials as a model of cooperation among affected jurisdictions. The city's redevelopment agency is currently negotiating an agreement with its school district to ameliorate any detriment caused by the redevelopment project.

MARK J. DOANE
Acting city manager
Emeryville

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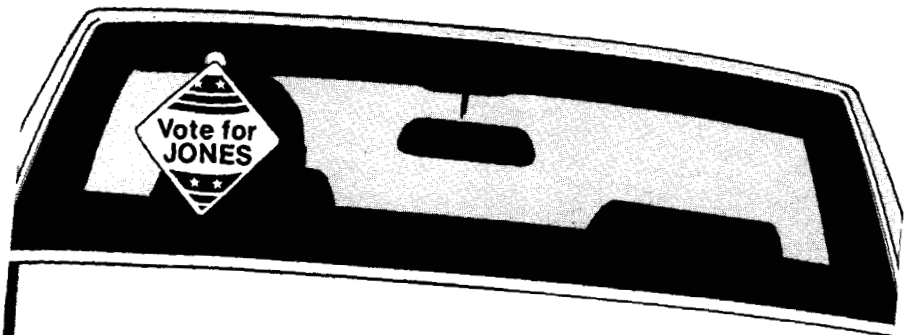

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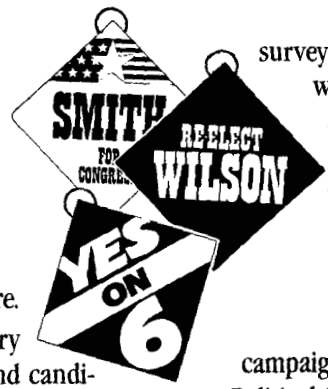

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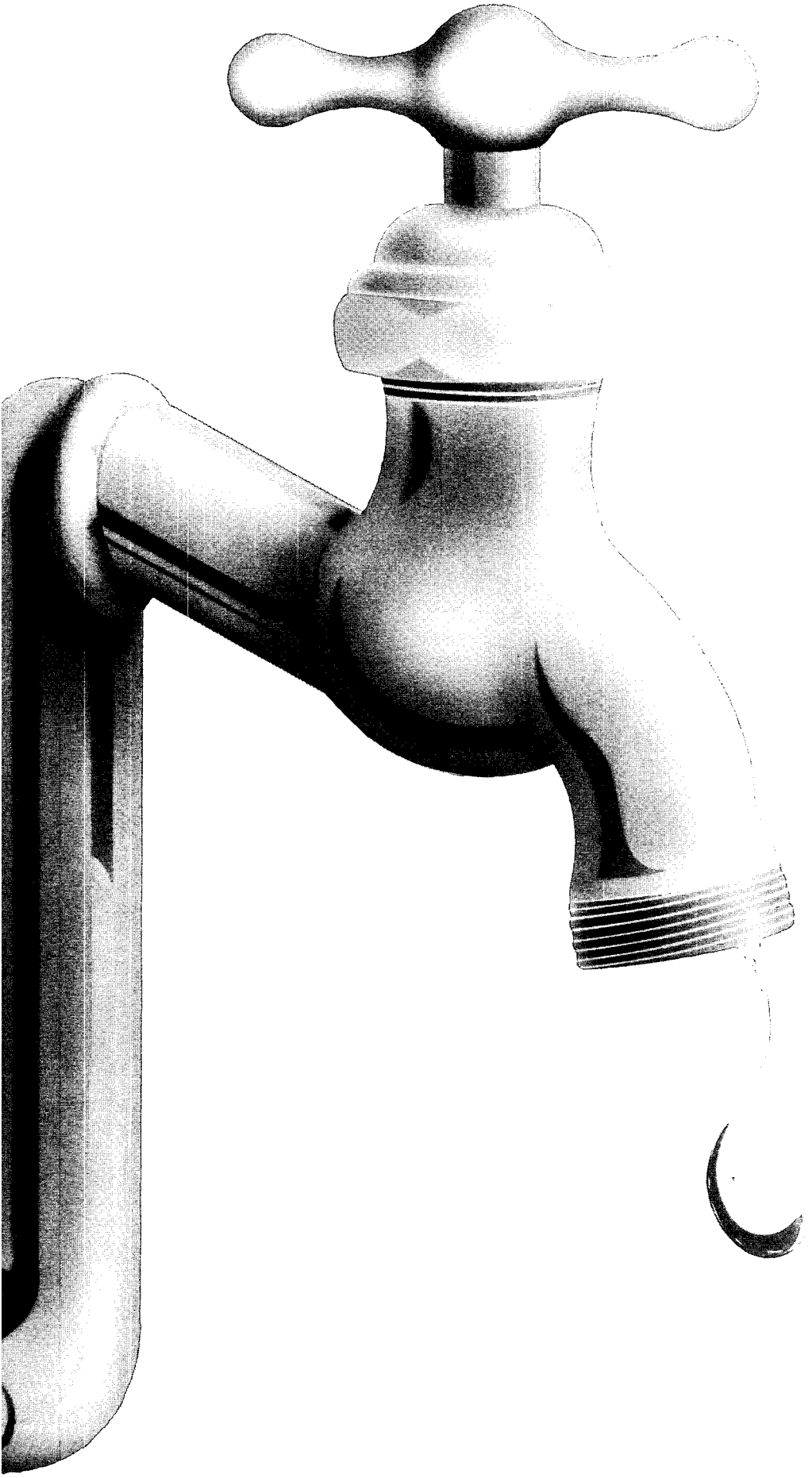

WATER, WATER

Does the state need a new way of thinking about a vital resource?

By Richard Zeiger

How much water does it take to keep striped bass alive? How much to tend migrating ducks? How much fresh water do crabs need to flourish in San Francisco Bay? How much is necessary to grow cotton in Kern County? And how much water is required to keep industry thriving in Los Angeles, or slake the thirst of a growing California population? And, if there isn't enough water for all these things to thrive — and most of the people who presume to speak for these interests concede there is not — just which ones should move to the head of the line?

This debate has been going on in California for decades and centers around the use of water from the 738,000-acre Delta formed where the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers flow into San Francisco Bay. The area provides about two-thirds of all the water used in the state, including 40 percent of its drinking water. Sometimes the battles over this water have been fought in the Legislature, and sometimes the state's voters have stepped in. Most often, they have pitted Northern California residents, who view the water as part of their natural habitat, against urban residents of the Southern California and farmers from the Central Valley who have used the water to build the state's robust economy.

But now the arena has shifted to

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the state's Water Resources Control Board — a five-member body appointed by the governor that wields wide-ranging power but functions in comparative obscurity. The board has started a three-year process that will attempt, at least for a time, to answer the questions. The first phase of the hearings has just ended, with the board submerged under 14 feet of exhibits and another 13,000 pages of testimony from hearings that at times were stupefyingly boring.

Although the hearings dwelt on technical questions, at bottom the board cannot escape making a decision based, in large measure, on value judgment.

"It's both a technical and a value process," said Board Chairman W. Don Maughn. "We're trying to the best of our ability to get every bit of technological evidence that's available. But certainly, a value judgment is going to be a very large part of that."

But critics of the process complain that the values being used by the board are old fashioned, that the board is dominated by conservatives appointed by Governor George Deukmejain, and that the Legislature is really the place for making this sort of decision.

Under state law and court decisions, the board has responsibility for setting water-quality standards for the Delta area and for San Francisco Bay. After that, they can allocate the water among the competing "beneficial uses."

The board once before, in 1978, issued a set of water standards for the Delta area in a decision known as D-1485. That decision set up the current system for allocating water from the Delta and fixed how much water could be taken by the State Water Project for shipment south through the California Aqueduct. The decision was challenged in court, and in 1986 the First District Court of Appeal issued a decision, subsequently confirmed by the state Supreme Court, saying that the Water Board had not acted broadly enough in issuing its standards, and that it should also have included in the quality of water in San Francisco Bay and the amount of water needed by Delta fish and wildlife as well as urban residents and farmers in the south. That decision, written by Judge John T. Racanelli, has become the basis for the new water board hearings.

The hearings give environmentalists a new chance to push their case that too much water is being taken out of the Delta to adequately support the ecology. They point to loss of the striped bass, whose population is about a quarter of what it once was; decrease in the number of salmon that spawn naturally in Central Valley streams; and a deterioration of San Francisco Bay itself, which they claim is not getting the influx of fresh water it needs to stay healthy. The more moderate of these interests are saying an additional 800,000 to 1.6 million acre-feet of water is needed each year. The more extreme groups want an additional six million acre-feet of water — nearly 10 times the 600,000 to 700,000 acre-feet of Delta water taken by the City of Los Angeles each year and nearly twice as much as is taken by the entire State Water Project. The environmentalists at the very least say that no additional water should be shipped south until standards can be guaranteed for the Bay and Delta.

"There is not enough water," said Thomas Graff, counsel for the Environmental Defense Fund. "There is too little water for even minimal environmental requirements."

Confronted with those claims, those who export water south from the Delta have counter-attacked on virtually every front. First, they remind environmentalists that the Delta is not a "natural" system. In fact, it is a man-made system of intensively farmed islands created when settlers discovered the value of the marsh lands that once existed there.

Second, they have attempted to refute the notion, fundamental to environmentalist claims, that the amount of fresh water flowing into the Bay has been reduced over the years. Although the State Water Project and the federal

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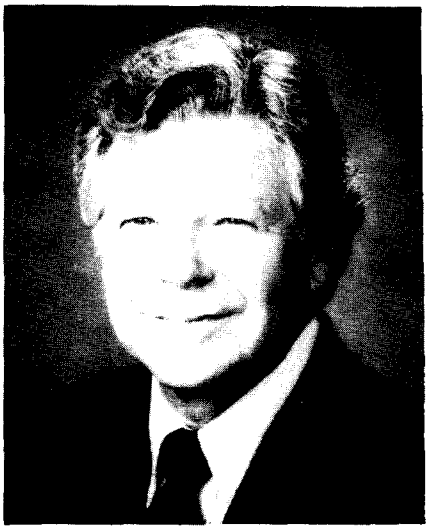
Central Valley Project take some six million acre-feet of water per year, enough to supply 12 million households, the water exporters say as much is going into the Delta as ever. This is so because the original marshlands that existed there used up much of the water and because, on average, there has been more rainfall in the state during the past 50 years.

Third, they say San Francisco Bay is actually in pretty good shape environmentally and that what problems do exist are the result of pollutants put into the Bay by the communities that surround it, rather than from a shortage of fresh water. Finally, they assert that, in any case, environmental uses deserve no better claim on the water than any other use. If striped bass are in trouble, they can be helped by the construction of new fish hatcheries, but keeping that species thriving should not require any more water. Environmentalists will have to learn to live with restrictions on water use, just as urban and agricultural users have. If this attitude prevails, the water exporters believe, with the construction of some additional facilities, additional water can be sent to the Southern California through the State Water Project.

"You know how the federal government is accused of trying to solve a problem by throwing money at it. Well, these guys approach a problem (in the Delta) by throwing more water at it. They believe that more water means better conditions for fish, and that's not really true," said Arthur Littleworth, a



Littleworth

Riverside attorney for the State Water Contractors, the group representing those who take water south of the Delta. "I think there is enough water, in the statutory sense, to provide reasonable protections. The answer is yes, if we can have some additional facilities."

Most of the water exporters seem content to leave the decision to the Water Resources Control Board. The Legislature, they argue, is too preoccupied with parochial issues to provide leadership needed for an equitable distribution of the water, and the board has the time and technical ability to make the decisions. Besides, the water exporters have not had much success lately getting their bills through a Legislature whose leadership is either from the north or sympathetic to environmental concerns.

Instead, they say the water board is better qualified to make the decision. "It's a good forum, as far as I'm concerned," said Carl Boronkay, general manager of the giant Metropolitan Water District that supplies water to most of Southern California.

However, some who favor additional water exports, including Senate Agriculture and Water Committee Chairman Ruben Ayala, a San Bernardino Democrat, are worried that the Southern California water supply may be in danger.

If the board sets high standards for the Bay, "Water will be diverted there, water that could be going to other parts of the state," Ayala said.

That, of course, is exactly what environmentalists seek. But they, too, are dubious about what the board will decide.

"I don't have confidence in the outcome," said Contra Costa Supervisor Sunne Wright McPeak. "Based on the comments by the board, we should be braced for allocations that don't benefit all beneficial uses."

Graff adds that the board "is basically conservative," appointed by Deukmejian, and seemingly sympathetic to the water exporters. "They want to do what the water contractors want; they lean that way. Still, they have an institutional obligation to protect the Bay and Delta. That requires more water. They're on the horns of a dilemma," said Graff.

While the board is grappling with this traditional dilemma of deciding between environmental and consumptive uses for the water, a new way of dealing with water problems is beginning to emerge. And this way of thinking about water has created some cracks in the traditional political alignment that has seen farmers and Southern California urban areas on one side in favor of more water development, and environmentalists and Northern California residents on the other.

The first public sign of this crack was the referendum on the proposed peripheral canal in 1982. At that time, environmentalists teamed up with some farm groups to oppose the measure. Some farmers were convinced they would be paying too much and getting too little. In addition, some legislators are beginning to say openly that it's time for a new coalition to be formed with urban water users and environmentalists on one side and farmers on the other.

Sacramento Assemblyman Phil Isenberg, a Democrat, in a recent speech to the Save San Francisco Bay Association,

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suggested that "in fact there is not any serious division of interest between urban Northern California and urban Southern California" over water. "The problems are with agriculture, and always will be."

Isenberg argues that agriculture uses 80 percent of the developed water in the state, much of it going to marginal farming lands or for crops that will end up being surplus. He said growing urban Southern California should get all it needs, and that the only reasonable place to get that water is from existing agricultural use — or, perhaps, misuse — of water.

Of course, few farmers will agree that they are inefficiently using water, and existing water law, based to a large degree on a 'use it, or lose it" theory, forces them to resist any redistribution of water even if they thought they could get by with less.

However, pushed by environmentalists and a few water users faced with the down-to-earth economics of getting new water supplies, the Legislature and some in the water community are beginning to rethink traditional notions about water. In the past few years, lawmakers have approved a series of laws designed to make it easier for water to be traded, or sold, among those with rights to its use. This change will allow water to flow where it is needed most or to those who can most afford to pay for it. It would also provide a way for farmers who don't need the water, or who are farming marginal land, an alternative way to still make a profit off their water without giving up their water rights.

A change in attitudes toward water would help the case of environmentalists, who maintain that the additional water that Southern California wants can be obtained by diversions from existing uses south of the Delta and that no additional water need be diverted from the Delta itself. But before these transfers can be made, there will have to be some fundamental changes in the way government thinks about distributing water.

"Given the current pricing of water and the restriction on its transfer among consumptive water users, there is too little remaining for even minimal Bay-Delta environmental requirements. But if there were changes in pricing ... you would be able to shake free water," said the Environmental Defense Fund's Graff. But these changes are slow in coming, and are being resisted by many in the water community who have a heavy investment, and considerable success,

Boronkay

with the current system."

The success of that argument could have strong appeal to a Water Resources Control Board struggling to allocate a finite amount of water.

But while the board's Chairman Maughn said he agrees there is a place for more transfers of water rights, he does not agree that water should be treated as a commodity that can be bought and sold to anybody for the highest price.

"I think the water belongs to the people of the state and somebody has to safeguard that. If it's possible to market some of that to the advantage of the people of the state, I think we ought to go ahead. But we have to look at the whole picture, not just the individual rights of the farmer and the person who wants to buy it. I don't believe in it being a commodity," said Maughn.

The change in thinking also holds some potential perils for the environmental movement as well. If additional water will go only to those who are prepared to bid the highest price, where will the money come from to pay for water for bass or salmon? Environmentalists, of course, say that the preservation of the natural system is entitled to a special place outside this water-selling system.

This conflict over how to think about water has had practical implications in Imperial County where the Imperial Irrigation District is still delivering water from the Colorado River to its farming customers through an antiquated and wasteful system that includes unlined canals that allow water to seep into the desert floor and ultimately into the Salton Sea. District officials concede there is waste, and they say they are willing to sell some of their water to the Metropolitan Water District, which also has some rights to Colorado River water and could take the water out at its outflows higher up the river.

Imperial officials have proposed selling the water to Metropolitan for $175 per acre-foot, a high price, but not beyond what Metropolitan is prepared to pay for some additional Northern California water. The money will be used to line canals and put in other water-conserving projects that will save between 100,000 and 250,000 acre-feet of water. Each acre-foot of water, some 326,000 gallons, would supply the house-

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hold water needs of two families for a year. The money would also provide a tidy profit to the district, at least according to Metropolitan officials.

And that's where the rub comes. Metropolitan doesn't think Imperial is entitled to make a profit on what the giant district argues is its water in the first place. Under existing law, according to Metropolitan, Imperial is obligated to conserve water, and that conserved water should be available to others with rights on the Colorado. Metropolitan says it will pay for the conservation projects, and according to Boronkay, will even pay a little for "good will" in the district. But all that comes to no more than $100 per acre-foot, Boronkay maintains.

"We favor marketing of water, when you have water to sell," said Boronkay, "We don't favor marketing of water that's not yours to sell. That's water that would go to Metropolitan if Imperial weren't wasting it."

Imperial officials are convinced that Metropolitan doesn't want to pay more because it has the clout to force their much smaller district to pay less. In addition, they believe Metropolitan officials do not want the Water Resources Control Board to think that Metropolitan has other places to get water than from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta while the board is in the process of deciding just who should be getting that water, a charge that Boronkay denies.

Photo by Rich Pedroncelli

Maughn

But water board Chairman Maughn said the board is not going to forget about Imperial water and is prepared to act to see that it is conserved. "We're mandated by the state to guard against waste or unreasonable use. If there is a need for water supplies and anybody is wasting it or making unreasonable use of it, I think we have an obligation to cut back on their use. We don't care who pays for it, or if they negotiate a deal. We won't set a price, but we could set deadlines for making water savings."

In fact, Maughn, who by force of personality and experience is the dominant figure on the board, is quietly pushing the board to take the broadest possible view of the Bay-Delta hearings, including consideration of all types of alternative supplies that might be available to the water contractors.

Maughn, 65, is an engineer by training who was involved in the planning and construction of much of the California water project. He is widely respected by nearly everyone involved in the water hearings, and most believe it is his views that will ultimately prevail when the board begins to make its allocations. Even McPeak says she has "a lot of confidence in Don Maughn as the chairman."

Prior to returning to chair the water board, he was deputy director of the Arizona Department of Water Resources and directed programs in that state designed to shift water from agricultural to urban uses. Despite his Arizona background, however, Maughn said he board will resist making that kind of change. "It's fair to say that some have suggested we make that kind of social change. Decide how many people are going to be allowed in different parts of the state, that sort of thing. That's outside our purview. That's the sort of thing that's up to the Legislature or the people."

Maughn intends for the board to be very practical in its decision. The standards the board sets for water quality in the Bay and Delta should not "exceed the total water supply. You keep it within the bounds of practicality. There is no value to putting down standards if it requires twice as much water as there is available."

But Maughn said the board will tread, at least gently, into one of the areas that has been the most contentious over the years: the construction of new water-transportation-and-storage facilities near the Delta.

The water exporters maintain that new facilities are needed to move water efficiently through the Delta system. If water can be moved more quickly, it can be captured during the winter months when water flows are highest and then stored south of the Delta in a new reservoir near Los Banos and also under-

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ground in Kern County. That might make it possible to release more water in the Spring, when it is needed by spawning fish. An added benefit, they maintain, would be the reduction of "reverse flows" of water in some Delta channels that confuse fish trying to swim upstream. Water now is low in the Spring because it is being stored behind giant dams in the northern part of the state above the Delta. These dams cannot hold the earlier winter waters because they have to save room as a flood-control measure. But to move the winter waters south of the Delta most effectively, channels in the north part of the Delta will have to be deepened and widened, and this smacks northerners as a peripheral canal in sheep's clothing.

In fact, it was conflict over these northern Delta improvements — and guarantees of water quality in the Bay — that prevented environmentalists and water exporters from reaching agreements on a new distribution of water from the Delta, despite a series of meetings at which there were signs of new cooperation. Some of that cooperative spirit remained, however, and was reflected in a bill currently before the Legislature that will allow for the reconstruction of some levees in the southern portion of the Delta, which most of the parties agree are needed to protect Delta farm lands and guarantee water quality.

But Maughn and the water board will have to decide which of these facilities will actually be built before they can figure out how much water, and at what quality, will be allocated to each of the competing uses. Maughn says the board can't count on too much being built. But he does expect that the new Los Banos Grande reservoir, which is comparatively non-controversial, will be built and possibly some other Delta facilities as well. But he won't count in a peripheral canal. That issue has been settled, as far as the board is concerned.

Maughn expects that not everyone, and possibly not anyone, will be happy with the results of the water board's decisions. He expects the various participants will try and alter the board's decision through the Legislature, and he is almost certain someone will take the matter to court.

"My view of balancing is that nobody is going to get everything they want. Court challenges are inevitable," Maughn said. But he hopes, when it is all over, that the challenges will be over the actual allocations, not over the process the board used.

In light of these likely legal and political challenges, Graff is not convinced that the board's hearing process is all that significant. "Any decision is three years away and chances are that final decision won't satisfy many of the issues. If it's adverse to Bay-Delta interests, as is probable, the Bay-Delta interests will protest and object to any new facilities. On the other hand, if the decision is favorable to us, the current diverters will protest and try to exercise their political clout. The board is going to end up being just one decision-maker among many."

But even though the board's last decision on the question of Delta water standards was overturned by the courts, in practice it lasted for 10 years as the determiner of how water was distributed.

It's possible that, if the Legislature remains stalemated and the courts work in their usual deliberative style, that the next board decision will survive another 10 years.

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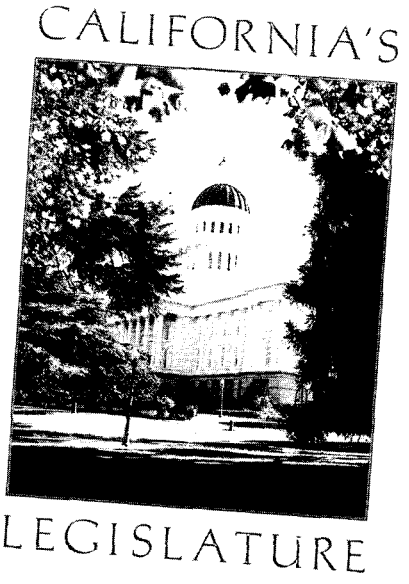
CALIFORNIA'S LEGISLATURE

by James Driscoll

Former Chief Clerk
of the Assembly



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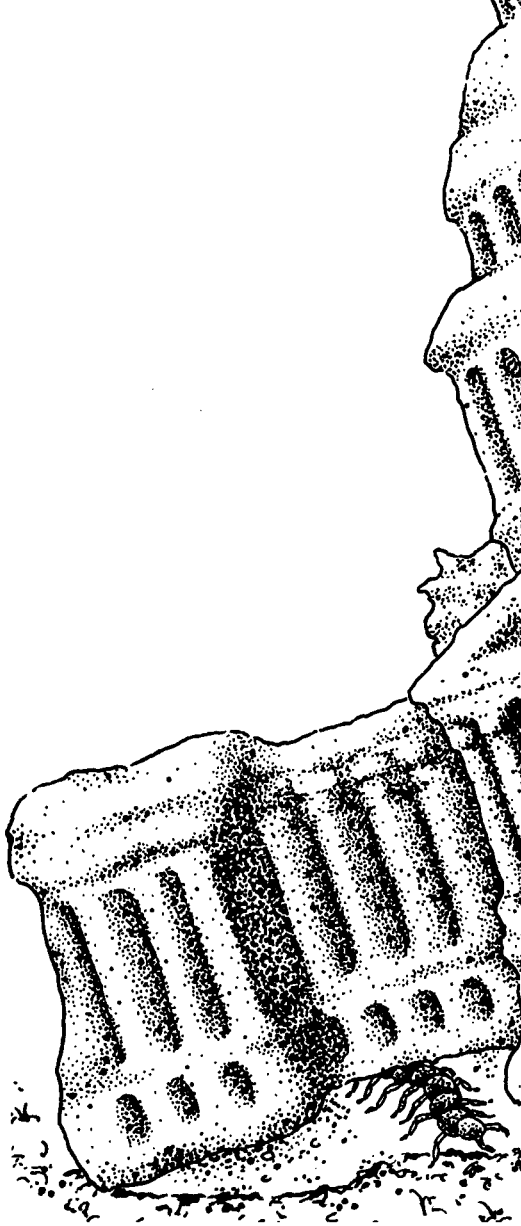
A PIECE OF THE ROCK

The rewards of working for the Legislature



By James Richardson

You will never get rich taking a job as a legislative staff member. Or, so they once said.

The days when commitment was its own reward are now in the past. Work the angles, and there are big bucks to be had in the halls of the state Capitol. And you don't even need to be elected.

Of course, there are still dedicated public-policy analysts tucked away on committee staffs. Entry level pay is still low, and most people who work in the Capitol don't make much money. However, some shrewd people are getting rich within the process. Year in and year out, some legislative staff members are paid royally for dropping off the state payroll to help their bosses get reelected. Many others own outside consulting firms, restaurants, polling firms, sign companies, lapel-pin manufacturing firms and real estate. And staff members by the drove accept gifts and junkets from lobbyists and then write the laws and accompanying bill analyses of interest to those same lobbyists and their clients.

Some staff members, like Republican Jerry Haleva (yearly state salary $81,264) or Democrat Larry Sheingold (yearly state salary $71,424) make far more money than the elected officials they serve.

James Richardson, a reporter in the Sacramento Bee *Capitol bureau, formerly was Sacramento bureau chief of* The Press-Enterprise *of Riverside.*

Haleva, who did not collect his full state salary in 1986 because he worked on his boss' (Republican Senator William Campbell) unsuccessful race for state controller, grossed $93,599 in political campaign payments. Sheingold, who helped mastermind Norwalk City Councilman Cecil Green's victory in the 33rd Senate District special election last Spring, co-owns a campaign firm —"Directions"— which has grossed tens of thousands of dollars in the last two years.

Those who permanently leave state service often take with them the skills to become lobbyists or a lucrative clientele of politicians seeking their electioneering services.

"The staff structure has become a holding place to park people until they are needed in the next election," says Sherry Bebitch Jeffe, project director of the Study of State Legislative Leadership at the University of Southern California.

Jeffe contends that some staff members have become more powerful than the elected representatives they serve. "If staff is responsible for the election of a legislator, what power does that give that staff member over that legislator?" she argues. "The staff becomes another interest group, like contributors and lobbyists, to whom the legislator is beholden."

Just how lucrative is it to be on the legislative staff?

Last fall, *The Press-Enterprise* newspaper of Riverside conducted an extensive examination of all of the Statements of Economic Interest that could be located for 1370 legislative staff members for two years ending in 1986. The forms,

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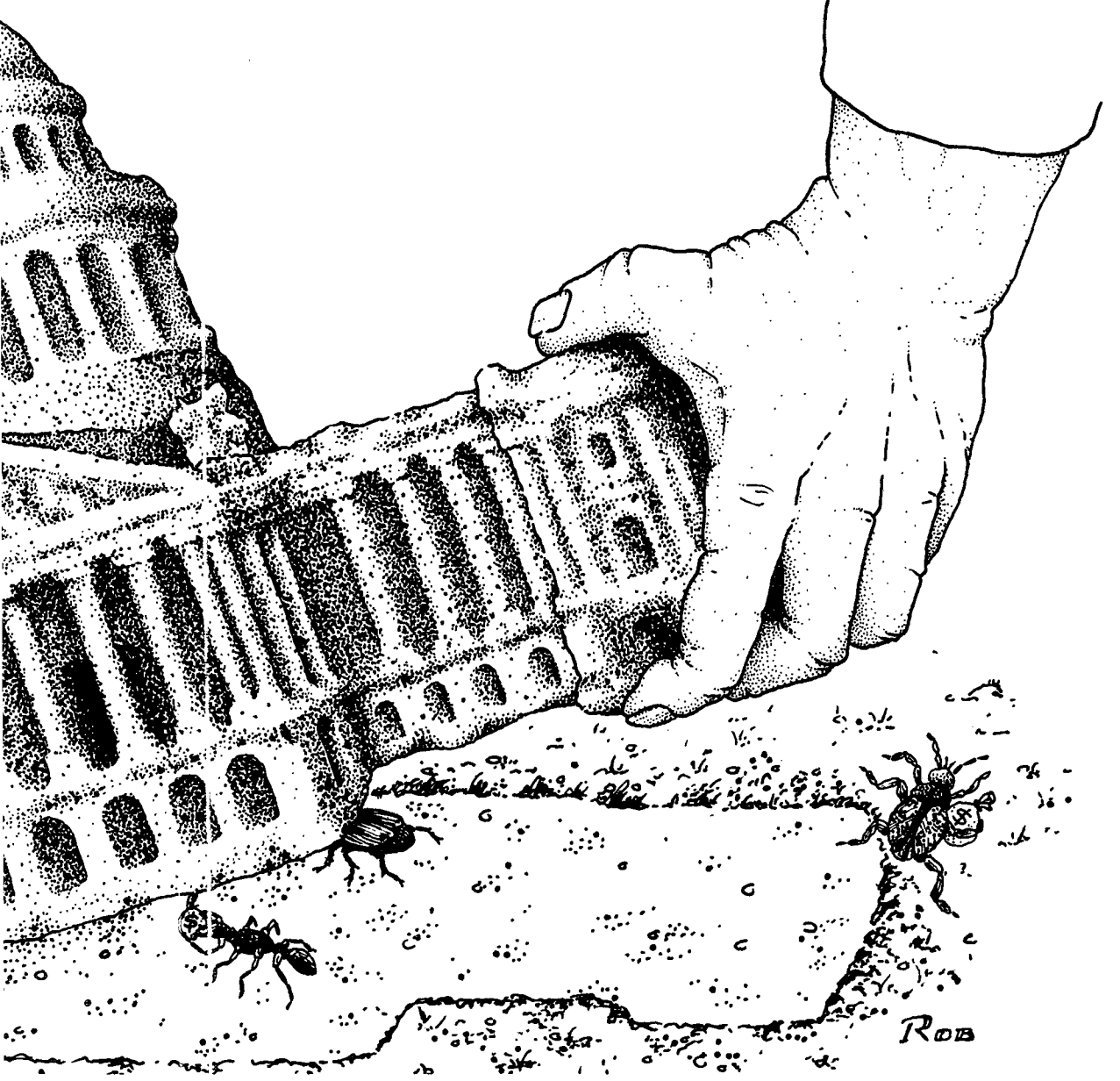

signed under penalty of perjury, require staff members to disclose outside income of more than $250, any outside jobs, significant investments, and gifts — whether from lobbyists or even a wedding.

The statements yielded a treasure trove of information about the wealth of legislative staffers and their involvement in election campaigns. Staff members listed interests in more than 200 outside businesses. They reported gifts and junkets to nearly every continent. It seems fact-finding tours to the Caribbean were part of making the laws of California.

But the statements did not reveal all.

To get a more complete picture, the disclosure statements were compared with legislative payroll records for three years and a sampling of campaign-spending statements for 67 legislators or their challengers, representing one-third of those who ran in the 1986 cycle. The comparison found that at least one-fourth of the entire staff had also received some sort of payment from an election campaign. Not only were highly paid legislative aides tapped for political chores, so too were a wide cross section of staff members, including secretaries, sergeants-at-arms, clerks, student interns — even a nurse — none of whom were legally required to disclose their personal finances.

By the hundreds, staff members dropped off the state payroll to work for their bosses and then returned to state service after election day. Others remained in the state's employ, working for campaigns after-hours. "A campaign is what we do every day but we do more of it," said Myra Miller, a district office secretary who had been paid $19,680 from Los Angeles Democratic Assemblyman Tom Bane's campaign for various political services since 1985.

Payments ranged from relatively paltry reimbursements for flowers and gifts to constituents, to handsome campaign consulting fees in the tens of thousands of dollars. At least $1.9 million was funneled from legislators' campaign committees to 528 staff members. The amount of dollars and the total number of staff who received them would doubtlessly be far higher if all campaigns could be sampled.

With loopholes in the reporting laws, most staff members need not disclose some forms of outside campaign income on their Statements of Economic Interest. In fact, the statements turned out to be poor roadmaps of the extent of campaign involvement by legislative staff members. There were 107 who reported campaign income while another 291 did not — a three-to-one ratio. Most probably they did not have to report the income because the payments were listed as reimbursements — even when those amounts were substantial. However, at least 88 may have violated the law by not disclosing what appeared to be payments for campaign services.

If the past performance of the state Fair Political Practices Commission is any indication, staff members need not

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fret about official scrutiny. Only one staff member — Larry Bush, who worked for then-Assemblyman Art Agnos — has ever been socked with a major fine for a disclosure violation.

"It's what goes on," said John Larson, chairman of the FPPC, in an interview. "I don't know the difference it makes. Everybody knows that they're working for the legislator or caucus. It's of more concern that they are not paid by the taxpayers when they are working on a campaign."

Although the FPPC reviews disclosure forms to make sure they are signed and the proper boxes checked, the enforcement agency rarely examines whether a staff member was truthful on the form. To gauge the agency's performance, *The Press-Enterprise* made liberal use of a court decision allowing inspection of the FPPC's investigative files, making requests to examine files for a sampling of 245 staff members. Only about a dozen had ever even been investigated, and most of those were for activities before the individual had joined state service.

In the view of critics, the issue is wider than whether legislative staff members follow financial disclosure laws written by the legislators who benefit from their campaign work. Jeffe, who has written widely on the subject (see *CJ*, January 1987), contends the public harm from politicizing the staff extends beyond giving incumbents an unfair edge at the polls and making some state employees rich. At risk, she says, is the fundamental policy-making ability of state government. "If they are off in elections," she argues, "there is no mechanism to think about long-term policy decisions."

Staff members who work in elections don't see it that way.

Kirk Briggs, a 24-year-old wizard with political signs, took an extended leave from the Assembly to work on Agnos' San Francisco mayoral campaign. Briggs said campaigning made him a better staff member because he got a better feel for public opinion. "Sometimes when you sit up in Sacramento and become a bureaucrat, you lose touch with what the public wants," Briggs says. "The people who do campaigns are the best policymakers."

Jeffe maintains that Briggs and other staff members have confused their proper role with that of elected representatives. "I didn't know the staff was supposed to be pressing the flesh," she says. "Why have legislators? What is the legislator supposed to be doing if the staff is out there pressing the flesh?"

Senate President pro Tempore David Roberti of Los Angeles maintains that staff partisanship is integral to government policy making. "Staff are not disinterested human beings," Roberti said. "Politics is very much a part of government. Staff here, quite on their own, recognize that if they want their policies to prevail they have to win seats."

And there are those out there quite willing to help the staff analyze proposed policies and write bills for legislators.

From continent to continent, those seeking to influence legislation lavish dinners, drinks, breakfasts, stage shows and sporting events upon not only lawmakers but also upon their staffs. The survey of Statements of Economic Interest showed that 137 staff members — many in senior positions — had declared gifts from lobbyists and others.

For example, a year ago, bankers hosted Speaker Willie Brown and select members of the Assembly staff at dinner in New York followed by a night on Broadway. The next day the American Stock Exchange hosted a lunch for the special guests.

Taxpayers do not pay for the trips. Those with business in the Legislature pick up the tab. Oil companies, dentists, doctors, manufacturers, utilities, insurance associations and builders are all active in hosting the staff. Sacramento Kings basketball tickets are popular gifts.

The California Trial Lawyers Association, one of the most savvy and influential lobbies in Sacramento, has paid the expenses for staff members from the Senate Judiciary Committee to attend its yearly convention. The committee is a crucial hurdle for the liability legislation the lobby seeks to influence.

"All lobbyists feel it's important to develop relationships with the staff — just like the members themselves," said Nancy Drabble, legislative counsel and lobbyist for the trial lawyers. "It's really important that the staff be lobbied along with the legislators."

The Irvine Company, land developers from Orange County, have hosted evening dinner boat cruises. The Sony Corporation, which heavily lobbied legislators in 1985 for changes in the unitary tax on foreign corporations, picked up the tabs for legislative aides in committees reviewing the issue. The State Bar of California, dependent on the Legislature for approval of docking dues on member lawyers, regularly picks up bar and restaurant tabs for staff members.

One the longest gift lists on a disclosure form by a staff member was filed by Amiel Jaramillo, a consultant to the Senate Business and Professions Committee headed by Senator Joseph Montoya, a La Puente Democrat. Jaramillo's gifts for two years were worth a total of $8006, his statements show, including $729 for air fare to Colorado; $908 for a hotel from a medical school in Texas; $170 for hotel charges paid for by oil lobbyists; $750 in hotel charges in New York paid for by the American Stock Exchange; dinner in Carmel worth $80 paid for by the California Medical Association; and a "field trip" to the American University of the Caribbean worth $887.

Foreign governments attempting to project a positive image in the United States have not lost sight of the fact that California is the sixth largest economy in the world. In December, one delegation of legislators — and their staffs — returned from the People's Republic of China just as another was departing. Israel, with one of the best lobbying operations in Washington, is no stranger to Sacramento either. David Ben Gurion University has hosted a yearly trip to Israel for delegations of legislators and staff to discuss water-reclamation issues. Staff members with no interest in water issues consider it a plum junket.

But not all foreign trips are paid for by a foreign governments. Dow Chemical and a trade foundation in 1986 hosted a tour of Australia for staffers, legislators and Lieutenant Governor Leo McCarthy to discuss Pacific Rim issues.

For some former staff members, the Legislature is a steady source of income, not only at election time but directly as well. Former Senate staff member David Townsend, now a much sought-after Democratic campaign consultant whose 1986 clients included Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley's gubernatorial campaign, had a personal services contract with the Senate Rules Committee for more than a year that terminated on New Year's Eve 1987.

Some, like Townsend, have made a transition from the legislative staff to the full time pursuit of consulting on the outside. The best example in recent years may be that of Richie Ross, one-time chief of staff to Speaker Willie Brown. Ross guided the Assembly Democratic election machine in 1986 — with mixed results — and Agnos' smashing mayoral triumph in 1987.

How well has Ross done? His campaign firms grossed $3.55 million in 1986, according to a survey by the *Sacramento Business Journal*.

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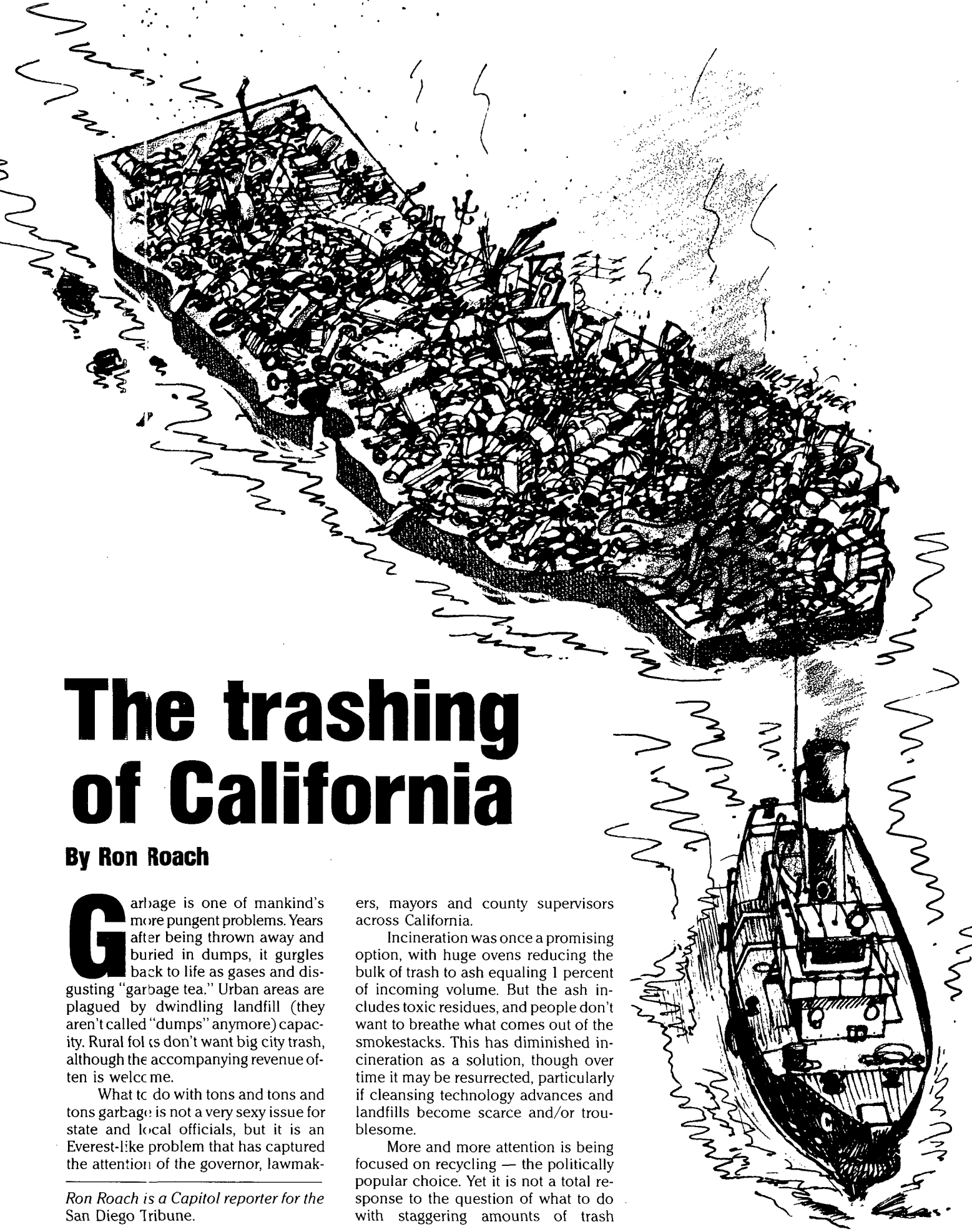

The trashing of California

By Ron Roach

Garbage is one of mankind's more pungent problems. Years after being thrown away and buried in dumps, it gurgles back to life as gases and disgusting "garbage tea." Urban areas are plagued by dwindling landfill (they aren't called "dumps" anymore) capacity. Rural folks don't want big city trash, although the accompanying revenue often is welcome.

What to do with tons and tons and tons garbage is not a very sexy issue for state and local officials, but it is an Everest-like problem that has captured the attention of the governor, lawmakers, mayors and county supervisors across California.

Incineration was once a promising option, with huge ovens reducing the bulk of trash to ash equaling 1 percent of incoming volume. But the ash includes toxic residues, and people don't want to breathe what comes out of the smokestacks. This has diminished incineration as a solution, though over time it may be resurrected, particularly if cleansing technology advances and landfills become scarce and/or troublesome.

More and more attention is being focused on recycling — the politically popular choice. Yet it is not a total response to the question of what to do with staggering amounts of trash

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Ron Roach is a Capitol reporter for the San Diego Tribune.

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and garbage produced by a growing population. Californians this year will throw away 38 million tons of trash and garbage, according to the California Waste Management Board. For politicians, that's a critical mass.

Government agencies, preoccupied for the past decade with trying to control dumps where hazardous waste has been left to poison the environment, are now concerned about impending study results that may sound yet another alarm for public health and environmental quality in California. These will detail the pollution oozing and gurgling inside — and, horrors, even outside — common landfills. These are the 2000-odd dump sites designed to receive relatively "harmless" residential and non-toxic commercial trash.

> **"Anytime you use the word 'crisis', people tend to overreact. This is not a crisis. It is an area in a state of serious concern..."**
>
> ***—Sherman Roodzant***

Assembly Speaker Willie Brown of San Francisco put garbage on his agenda for 1988. He called for a statewide system to rescue California from problems that are plaguing eastern cities. Brown cited San Francisco, which has no landfill site and an ordinance barring anyone from dumping garbage in the city.

San Franciscans were facing a growing problem until a landfill site was found 57 miles away in Alameda County. The Alameda site was a rescue operation after San Francisco supervisors voted against participating in a trash-to-energy plant. Still, San Francisco appears to be ahead of most other California cities in recycling efforts, while its neighbor to the south, San Jose, could become a model for recycling for the nation.

Other parts of the Bay Area are experiencing "garbage wars." In Contra Costa County, overlooking the East Bay, civic leaders of the suburban eastern half of the county have discussed forming a new county, which would be called Delta County. Among other reasons, the area's 150,000 residents are upset at efforts by the more populous western half to create landfills in the eastern half, from Pittsburg to the San Joaquin County line.

"It is clear," Brown said, "that throughout the state people are experiencing the same problem: What do you do with the garbage? If we don't develop some statewide system for handling it, we're going to experience what New York did in terms of that barge floating around with all that garbage on it."

The speaker continued, "I'm told on the local level you can get yourself elected — or unelected — based on how you handle garbage."

State politicians usually try to deflect the political heat to local government, but the expression of concern in Sacramento obviously means the temperature is rising on this issue in the Capitol.

At the local level, leaders have been knee-deep in the mess for some time. In Los Angeles, Mayor Tom Bradley nixed an incinerator project after residents demanded that it not harm their health. The City Council refused to enlarge an existing landfill and wouldn't allow the county to use its property within the city limits as dump sites. Nor do neighboring communities want more Los Angeles trash.

In San Diego, politicians about-faced and voters last November followed suit, rejecting the $306-million, 2250-ton-a-day waste-to-energy mass burn project on Kearney Mesa. A $217-million recycling and trash-burning project at San Marcos has been held up by lawsuits.

By the mid-1990s, many existing landfills will be full, and the costs of disposal will soar. By 1991, according to the California Waste Management Board (CWMB), at least 20 counties, representing more than 70 percent of waste generated statewide, will have seven years or less of permitted capacity.

"We're really close to the brink," said Assemblywoman Lucy Killea. The San Diego Democrat is carrying a major waste recycling bill, including curbside pickups, with a two-year goal of a 25 percent reduction in waste that winds up in landfills. "Since local governments are fiscally and politically finding it difficult to handle, some statewide push is very important," she said.

Mike Mohajer, Los Angeles County's waste manager, said the demise of a proposed trash-to-energy project in South-Central Los Angeles, after many years and $12 million in planning, means additional landfills are much more of a priority even with expanded recycling efforts.

"It takes three, five or six years to find a landfill site, so the time of crisis, as far as I'm concerned, is now," Mohajer said.

Sherman Roodzant, chairman of the often-maligned CWMB that has been accused by environmentalists of being pro-incinerator and not a big enough booster of recycling, did not share Mohajer's pessimistic view.

"Anytime you use the word 'crisis,' people tend to overreact," Roodzant said. "This is not a crisis. It is an area in a state of serious concern, and local governments and citizenry need medium- and long-term (landfills), and we don't have them."

More than half the 58 counties' management plans were outdated, Roodzant said, when he came on the board three-and-a-half years ago, "for a multitude of reasons ... counties and this board did not exercise authority." Nearly all plans are updated now.

Local governments pinned their hopes on the trash-burning option, which was even more popular a decade ago when the Jerry Brown administration pushed alternative sources of fuel to provide electricity. Thus, trash-to-energy got millions of dollars from the state to help kick-start the option.

Roodzant stressed that while there is a "certain level of concern," landfill sites are out there, if local governments will stop bickering and politicians will take action and choose them. Unlike some parts of the nation, California still has plentiful open space, Roodzant said. "We've got to stop our political infighting" and overcome the "*NIMBY* — Not-In-My-Backyard — syndrome," he said.

However, Mohajer recalled all the media attention over 30,000 tons of trash and garbage that piled up during a week when Philadelphia collectors went on strike. "In one week, 30,000 tons. People made a big deal about that. We pick up 49,000 tons a day in Los Angeles County."

There are many parts to the problem, Mohajer said, "but the biggest is we are a most wasteful society. We have to face up to our responsibility. The public, industry, government — everybody — must participate. And politicians have got to bite the bullet."

Meanwhile, Californians Against Waste (CAW), an environmental group that pushed passage of the state's "bottle bill" in 1986, calls trash-to-energy a deteriorating option, a

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wrong policy turn by the state Waste Management Board. CAW cites health risks associated with landfills and pushes for expansion of recycling programs to include curbside pickups.

"Recycling and waste reduction are the only techniques that can be implemented immediately to deal with the waste crisis," said Bill Shireman, executive director of CAW, which claims 40,000 members. "Ultimately, we can find alternatives to dumping all our waste. Landfills and incinerators will be dinosaurs of the past."

In the past few years, the Legislature has taken some steps, and the CWMB has been considering a staff proposal — undergoing its fifth draft at this writing — that calls for more recycling.

Roodzant said he is not convinced that recycling is economically feasible in all cases. Curbside recovery should not be mandatory, he added. "Recycling is not the total answer. It is part of the solution. The market place and willingness of the public to participate are keys, and I also disagree with what part of the waste stream to address with recycling."

The board staff, noting local governments' decision to generally give recycling a closer look, noted that citizens usually "do not discriminate between solid-waste management options that they don't like ... they don't like all of them equally. New landfills and proposed waste-to-energy projects rally local citizens into a fervor that local politicians find hard to ignore. As a result, even well-designed, environmentally sound, technically practical solid-waste projects may not be sited."

Designed to push local government to act, legislation approved last year requires counties to submit plans to the CWMB that estimate when landfill capacity will be exhausted. Counties within eight years of running out of space must designate or reserve new landfills and establish specific programs for handling excess waste. The bill, by Democratic Assemblyman Dominic Cortese of San Jose, also requires counties to set a recycling goal of 20 percent, though recycling proponents sought a higher percentage.

Many cities and counties already are shooting for a higher percentage of waste recovery and recycling.

Robert Epler, chief of the city of San Diego's Resource Development Department, said his city's landfill capacity can last until "sometime in 1995 or 1996," and the city and county have agreed to seek a new site within a 1600 square-mile-area of the county's southwest quadrant. Meanwhile, there is a proposed five-year San Diego recycling plan, with a goal of reducing waste at landfills by 25 percent. City hall started recycling white paper this year, with a plan to encourage private enterprise throughout the city to do the same. The plan includes a feasibility study for curbside pickups of recyclable materials, but Epler said it would take four or five years to implement.

In San Jose, a pilot program began in mid-1985 involving 20,000 homes, and it turned out to be so successful that the city's garbage contractor bought the company that had the $99,600 contract for the experiment. It produced curbside collection above the 25 percent goal that had been set. In its first year, each home in the test zones produced an average of 650 pounds of recyclables, and the San Jose City Council voted to expand it citywide. San Jose reports its program could decrease the amount of wastes going into landfills by 36 percent by 1992, when collection and disposal costs are estimated to be $50 a ton, compared to $30 a ton for recycling.

Also in San Jose, Browning-Ferris Industries has been gaining city approvals for "The Recovery," billed as a national model state-of-the-art integrated facility of recycling, re-

Photo by Gordon Lazzarone

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source recovery and landfill. David Gavrich, BFI director of resource recovery and recycling, said latest techniques from BFI operations in Houston and Toronto will be employed, with a goal of diverting 40 percent of the Silicon Valley's commercial waste from the existing landfill.

The plant, including an educational program to instill the recycling ethic in children, will cost $5 million to $10 million to build on an 11-acre site. It will handle a ton of trash for $17 to $18, Gavrich said, compared to the $70 a ton which he said trash-burning operations require if electricity isn't subsidized by ratepayers.

In San Francisco, Joseph Johnson, program manager for solid waste, said the city's success in finding a 15-million-ton capacity landfill in Alameda County headed off a medium-term crisis after politicians dumped the trash-to-energy option. San Francisco now has 17 to 20 years of landfill capacity, Johnson said, and will try to stretch it through an aggressive recycling program. Already, 25 percent of the city's trash is recycled and, starting next fall, a new curbside collection program will boost that performance significantly, he said.

At the state level, Assemblywoman Killea and George Larson, CWMB manager of resource conservation and planning, said the state must develop more markets for recycled products. Killea's bill would enlist the state's World Trade Commission to help find Pacific Rim markets for California's used newspapers and glass, among other things. Otherwise, they said, substantial increases in recycled goods would result in stockpiled material that could wind up in some landfill. Recyclables could be treated like pork bellies and chickens on commodities future markets, to provide stable prices and demand, Larson said.

Killea's bill would require each county to develop a recycling strategy integrated with waste-management plans. Each city of at least 30,000 population would also adopt a plan. Recycling coordinators would be hired and ordinances adopted to mandate source separation of at least three recyclable materials, with the requirement that none could be mandated unless there is a profitable market for them. The legislation also would encourage the state to buy recyclable supplies, with some mandates, such as paving materials used by the Department of Transportation.

Killea would provide $10 million for grants and loans to counties to help recycling programs, raising the money with dumping-fee increases of 5 cents to 15 cents per ton of trash. The CWMB staff proposal calls for a 10 percent surcharge on local trash collection bills. Killea said her bill would raise the money from additional fees from haulers of trash from commercial customers — who provide more than half the waste — and from apartment buildings. The single-family residential customer would not have to pay the fee, she said.

Democratic Assemblyman Charles Calderon of Los Angeles is proposing a bill that would impose a $1.50-per-ton fee on waste disposed of at landfills to finance recycling programs, with cities and counties required to start separating recyclable material from the waste stream by February 1, 1989. Mike Burns, Calderon's aide, said the bill was being changed prior to formal introduction to make the Department of Conervation, not the CWMB, the supervising agency. "There's a general feeling that the CWMB doesn't represent the environmental side," Burns said.

Politically, the issue is being complicated by a battle over turf. Roodzant wants the CWMB to sponsor its own bill. The Legislature gave the Department of Conservation authority over the bottle redemption program, but the board staff re-

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port noted that this represents less than 5 percent of the solid waste stream in the state. "Management of the solid waste stream is clearly the province of the board," according to a board discussion item on its January agenda. It also noted that budget cuts "further reduced the ability of the board to effectively project an image of leadership in the area of recycling."

Albert Moreno, former CWMB executive director who now represents the northern district of the California Refuse Removal Council, urged the board to support legislation that would result in recycling costs showing up on a resident's

Roodzant

Killea

utility bill, as a separate item. "This way the people will know how much it costs and make the decision. We think recycling is a must — it's certainly going to save landfill space — but it is not economical in all cases. It should not be mandated," Moreno said.

Roodzant said a majority of the CWMB agrees that "citizens should know what we are paying for in recycling. Don't hide it in landfill tipping fees."

Besides trying to help provide new and better markets for California's recyclables, Larson said the CWMB role is that of a stimulator. The state board staff proposal calls for development of a logo to be placed on recycled material and products, and of incentives to increase awareness such as cash bonuses and manufacturers' awards for participation.

"We could stimulate interest by having ways to win prizes by buying the right logo products," Larson said.

Californians Against Waste, a loud critic of the CWMB's policies, believes the board could surprise its detractors if a draft report, circulated in January for industry comment, is adopted without significant changes. The board staff survey of 25 recycling programs in California concludes with a recommendation that each community in the state consider curbside recycling as an option.

The draft, dated January 1988, found that on the average, the cost per ton for landfill disposal was $14.96 *more* than the average cost of curbside recycling. Kelly Smith, research director for CAW, said he wasn't surprised by the finding — except to find it in a CWMB document, even if it was in draft form.

The problem is more than finding a home for tomorrow's can of rubbish. What about all the existing stuff, fermenting into unknown environmental and health dilemmas?

Legislation two years ago by Assemblyman Calderon required state air- and water-quality agencies to survey all dumps in the state for dangerous conditions. These studies are expected to produce preliminary reports by this summer.

A bill passed last year by Democratic Assemblywoman Delaine Eastin of Union City creates a $100 million "superfund for garbage." Starting in 1989, higher fees from dump operators will raise $20 million annually for five years. The fees, 55 cents a ton, amount to about 2 cents a week on a residential trash bill.

Eastin said California's closed and active solid-waste landfills required a cleanup fund similar to those created nationally and in California to deal with toxic waste sites. Regular household landfills become toxic over time, Eastin said, including those that become unwitting recipients of hazardous items, such as pesticide containers. She cited a 1986 study by ICF Consulting Associates for the CWMB that found more than 600 closed or active landfills may cause contamination of groundwater or produce dangerous gases. IFC estimated the cost to close, clean and maintain landfills at between $1.5 billion and $5.2 billion.

Christopher Peck, board spokesman, cautioned that the 1986 study means "the potential exists at all those sites but it has not been documented." Because of the Calderon legislation, Peck said, "we're looking at all those sites now and based on those studies, we'll have some reliable information" later this year.

Another study, also conducted in 1986 by the South Coast Air Quality Management District, found concentrations of two cancer-causing agents — vinyl chloride (a gas widely believed to stem from decomposing plastic products) and benzene (an industrial chemical) — in 85 percent of 20 sites surveyed.

Roodzant said the South Coast study was "blown out of proportion" by the news media, and that a district scientist who worked on the report actually apologized to the board for causing hysteria. While there are some "low levels" of what would be toxic under Proposition 65 (the state's toxics initiative approved by voters in 1986), Roodzant said, "most are very insignificant."

Bill Sessa, spokesman for the state Air Resources Board, said traces of benzene have been found in dumps, but 99 percent of this pollutant comes from motor-vehicle exhaust and gasoline vapor. It is not considered a serious problem at landfills, Sessa said. As for vinyl chloride, Sessa said, "We don't know for sure." Initial studies of dump sites following ARB-adopted guidelines will produce a preliminary report this summer, Sessa said.

At the state Water Resources Control Board, officials are beginning to write the first report from investigations required by the Calderon bill of landfill seepage impacts on water supplies. If these studies determine that pollution is so great that operating landfills should be shut down, the effects could be devastating, not only to the landfill industry but also to cities that lack contingencies. As has happened in the east, cities may have to ship trash hundreds of miles and pay steep dumping fees. The trash-burning option might shift back to policy-makers' front burners.

But once scientists report finding vinyl chloride or other dangerous substances, they must also assess the risk, which takes more time. "It is far easier to find the elements than it is to tell what it really means in terms of public health," said the ARB's Sessa.

San Francisco's Johnson, asked if the city's long-since-closed dumps have been problems, replied, "Not yet — knock on wood. No, we have not had a big problem."

Other parts of the country — and some California communities — have been less fortunate. Some dump sites in California have been in use long enough that they may be beginning to show the same types of problems that East Coast and Midwest dumps have had.

Continued on next page

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In Sacramento, Jonathan Mulder, associate engineer and geologist for the state Water Resources Control Board, sits by a computer where data from regional boards on surveys to date are punched up on the screen. The first 150 dumps were supposed to have been surveyed for leaks by July 1, 1987. As of January 1, 1988, he said 83 reports had been received. From summaries sent in by regional boards, "it is still too early to tell" how much of a problem exists, Mulder said. There are 2219 operating and non-operating dumps, and at the rate the survey is going, it would take until the year 2001 to complete the job, he said.

However, the number fluctuates as some are dropped from the list as insignificant sites and others are added, and he expects over time the survey will target a lesser number of major potential problem sites. "Ideally, we should be investigating the real bad ones in the next few years and get a good idea of the ones that are leaking."

So far, Mulder said, reviews of summaries have found nine leakers of hazardous matter: four at George Air Force Base near Victorville; others at Hollister, Martinez, Eureka, and in Mendocino and Del Norte counties.

While the Air Force has cooperated, the U.S. Navy in San Diego County has not complied, Mulder said. Of 19 sites in that county selected for checking in the first round, 11 were on Navy land, and Mulder said the Navy said nine of them "were not necessarily disposal sites, and the Calderon legislation was not applicable."

Mulder said once the investigations are complete, the next step will be up to the state Department of Health Services. "We just say we found a leak above ground water ... we don't say if the water is usable, or being used, or if the aquifer is one that's already been written off."

Investigators did not have to look at the more than 100-year-old Sacramento dump site next to the American River, where problems were reported last summer. And mayoral candidates last fall jockeyed for positions at the site for news conferences. Methane gas traveled underground thousands of feet through the levee, killing vegetation. Iron content of the river is much higher downstream from the dump. So far, monitors in a nearby neighborhood have not detected gas, said Tim Crandall, engineer for the regional water board. He said poisonous vinyl chloride also has been found.

This dump will be closed, as previously scheduled, in another two years, Crandall said, but he added that the "cap" will not prevent the gas from seeping out laterally. The gas is 60 percent methane and the rest carbon dioxide, he said, which won't explode. If it should seep into a building and mix with enough air, it is potentially explosive, he added. Last year, in Stanislaus County, a home built next to a dump filled up with methane gas, causing the occupants to sleep in a camper on the driveway.

In West Covina, methane gas from the BKK Corporation hazardous-waste site seeped into nearby homes at potentially explosive levels in 1984, causing the evacuation of 19 families for as long as six months. The gas contained vinyl chloride. BKK upgraded its gas-recovery system, and the city and BKK agreed that only household trash would be dumped there for 10 years. Then it, too, would be closed.

At Industry Hills, in the San Gabriel Valley, which has more than its share of landfills, a major hotel and golf course have been built on an old landfill site. Old landfills, operating or closed, once were way out in the country, like Sacramento's. Now many are in the midst of suburban sprawl.

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Only a few years ago, trash-burning projects, using steam to turn turbines and create electricity, seemed to be the wave of the future. Common in Europe and already operating in many East Coast communities, several dozen were being planned in California. However, opposition from local residents, environmentalists, politicians, even ballot referenda, intervened.

A 300-ton-a-day plant in the City of Commerce is operating and a 1200-ton-a-day plant is being built in Long Beach. A third plant is under construction in the Modesto area. Other than these, and perhaps the North County Resources Recovery project at San Marcos, more trash-burning plants probably will not be permitted in California pending evaluations of the City of Commerce plant and those being built, said CWMB spokesman Peck.

CWME Chairman Roodzant believes the mood against trash-to-energy will change. Test results from the Commerce plant's first six months of operation have been "heartening," Roodzant said, and this technology should be a "viable option" along with landfills and recycling. Roodzant stressed that he supports the Long Beach incineration project, and his Cerritos home is only about 10 miles downwind. The plant is scheduled to begin operations this summer. Nevertheless, the board has been criticized for promoting waste-to-energy.

"I've heard references to the board's strategy," said Roodzant. "But this Deukmejian administration board's strategy is to leave determination of what kind of mix or methodology to local officials with input of the citizenry."

Los Angeles County's Mohajer commented, "Last year, if you asked me about waste-to-energy proposals, I'd say we have 10 proposals. Right now? None. For the next few years anyway, waste-to-energy is a dead issue."

Ruling out waste-burning plants, said San Francisco's Johnson, "is a very provincial view. Look back East and, if we enlarge our scope and look at the world, waste-to-energy is not dead. Incineration is not a panacea. What do you do with the ash and what do you do with what comes out of the smokestack? But it should be part of a balanced response."

Smith, research director for CAW, said the waste industry has done a "back flip in the past few months." With various trash-burning proposals folding in the face of political and public sentiment, Smith said, "Now they see the writing on the wall. The greatest municipal cost after police and fire, and sometimes after transportation, is trash."

Compared to other parts of the country, trash collection and dumping comes relatively cheap in California. Dumping or tipping fees in Los Angeles County range from $7.50 to $14 a ton — "still pretty damned cheap," said Mohajer, when compared to as much as $65 a ton in New York.

"Fees are cheap now, but they are not going to stay that way, so the cost to homeowners is going to go up substantially in the next year or two," Mohajer predicted.

Victor Pottorff of the County Supervisors Association of California said the association opposes any effort to preempt local government authority. "There has never been garbage (piling up) on the streets of California and there never will be," he said.

He said CSAC dropped its opposition to the Cortese bill last year because it addressed the problem of politicians holding off on tough decisions. "I imagine local officials will wait until the last possible minute on a landfill decision because it's a painful one. And it's going to cost more," Pottorff said.

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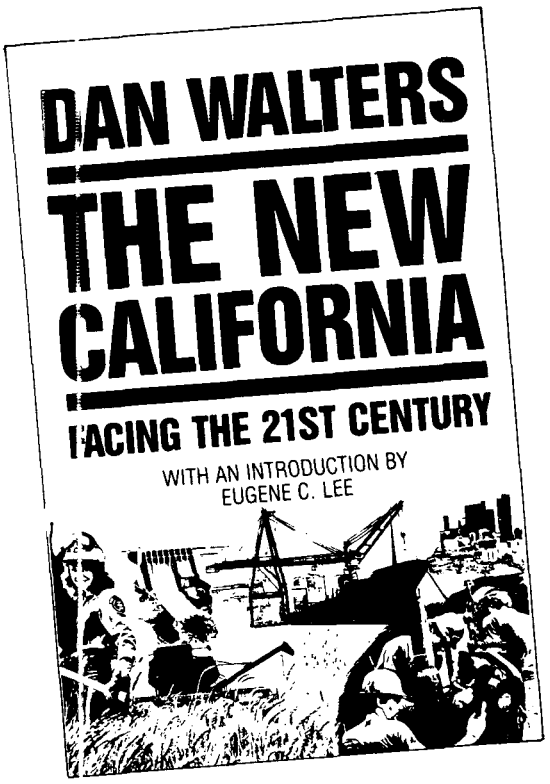

The New California — Facing the 21st Century

by Dan Walters

with an introduction by Eugene C. Lee

The *Sacramento Bee's* well-known political correspondent, Dan Walters, recently completed a 9000-mile odyssey through California's 58 counties which resulted in a 15-part series in the *Bee*. The articles describe the socioeconomic future of the nation's largest state and the political implications of these trends. This lively and insightful series will be available in book form June 15th. The 180-page book contains numerous charts with detailed political and demographic data. Price: $8.95.

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The Hal

Kenny and Jimmy and LA

By Alexa Bell

In Los Angeles, the offspring of celebrities are everywhere. Whether munching pizza at Spago or starring in brat-pack films, LA's second-generation celebrities are a ferocious breed. They wear last names like union memberships, moving easily into their parent's professions. If the kids can't act, at least they've got name recognition. If they *can* act, so much the better.

Leave it to Los Angeles to cast a celebrity offspring as city attorney. Tall, lean and youthful looking, James Kenneth Hahn is a casting director's dream as the earnest young city attorney. And in Los Angeles' style, Hahn received a helping hand from a well-known father. But in this case the celebrity is a politician, and acting is just half the job.

If any local politician qualifies as a celebrity, it is Hahn's father, County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn. Reminders of the folksy, 68-year-old county supervisor abound. For years he's been one of the most visible, most photographed, most press-conferenced and press-released politicians around. So far there have been no streets named after him, but this may change soon as the City of Gardena debates just such a plan.

The popularity of Kenny Hahn has always been a strange Los Angeles phenomenon. The nine-term supervisor — who last month said he plans to run for a 10th term — has a style more suited to Mayberry than to the nation's second-largest metropolis. But over the years, his down-home style has turned into political gold. Hahn, a white man in a

Alexa Bell is a freelance writer living in Los Angeles.

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n Dynasty

ics

heavily minority district, has been returned to office eight times, winning by an average 85 percent margin. In his last election, in 1984, he blasted out three challengers by amassing 86.8 percent of the vote.

But during recent years, Kenny Hahn has had a special mission in addition to his usual county duties. He also launched the political career of his only son in 1981 in a campaign for the office of city controller. Despite his untested status, the younger Hahn, 31 at the time, won. Four years later, when "Jimmy" gunned for the city attorney's job, his father's labor and minority allies were there to help him to victory.

By all appearances, Hahn has succeeded in placing his son on the political fast track. Back in 1981, when Jim Hahn won his first election, supporters were already talking about the governor's race in 2004. Today, the younger Hahn says he's focused on reelection as city attorney. But as his father enters the twilight of his career, Hahn seems set for ascension, if not to his father's supervisorial seat, then to district attorney — or maybe Congress.

But who is Jim Hahn, the man with the big political future? In one sense, the answer is easy. Hahn grew up in the public eye, surrounded by his father's constituents and political cronies. His family home, located in Los Angeles' mostly Black Southwest section, was a hub for liberal, reformist politics. As a youngster, he was a frequent sight at his father's political events and known to the world as "little Jimmy Hahn."

Yet, the question is not so simple. For starters, the younger Hahn's track record is still slim. But more important, it's often been hard to separate father from son. Until recently, the younger Hahn lacked the political aggression that has enabled his father to sharpen his public image. Further, during the early years at least, Hahn made few political moves without his father's advice — and when he acted it was hard to know whom to credit.

Seeking an interview with Jim Hahn extends the mystery — and the impression that dad is calling the shots. Three weeks of calls requesting father-son interviews go unreturned by the city attorney's press secretary. While he stalls, the supervisor permits an interview. The day after that interview, James Hahn's office calls to set up an appointment. The reason for the delay: Hahn, the younger, had not until then discussed the proposal with Hahn, the elder.

Meeting Hahn in the flesh, however, is a reassuring experience. The 37-year-old city attorney has a comfortable manner that comes off as direct and open. The "Far Side" calendar on his desk (a gift from his wife) seems a promising tip-off about his sense of humor. When he talks, he exudes more sincerity than blind ambition.

Hahn appears serious about his job as city attorney — very serious. And as befits his heritage, he strikes a mildly populist tone. "I want to get all the lawyers in the office and all the staff to understand that we work for the people of the city of Los Angeles," he says. "We're their lawyers and we need to make sure we do our job with that in mind."

Hahn says he wanted the job because it touches upon a variety of critical urban issues, and he has spent the last year taking his office in an increasingly activist direction. Some of his actions have engendered controversy, such as his decision to prosecute the distributor of a sexually explicit album poster for providing harmful matter to children. Hahn also stirred up controversy when he publicly challenged the mayor and chief of police, refusing to prosecute indigents arrested for camping on the streets.

The city, overwhelmed by a sharp surge in its downtown homeless population, had threatened to arrest street dwellers who refused to accept hotel vouchers. The problem, Hahn says, was that there weren't nearly enough vouchers to go around. Under those circumstances, the city "had no business telling them they were breaking the law," Hahn declares.

Hahn believes his opposition helped spur the city's current emphasis on providing more housing for the homeless. "I got flak from a lot of quarters — especially the police department, though that's been smoothed over," Hahn says. "People thought then that I wasn't part of a team approach, but I thought they were going in the wrong direction — and I was proven right."

Not all of Hahn's campaigns have been controversial. He has successfully tapped into an emotional issue with Los Angeles residents by going after gangs and drug dealing. He has tried to stretch the city's weapons for fighting gang activity by using court injunctions and abatement actions. Hahn's staff also helped write state legislation that would establish gangs as a form of organized crime and expand the potential for anti-gang actions, including crim-

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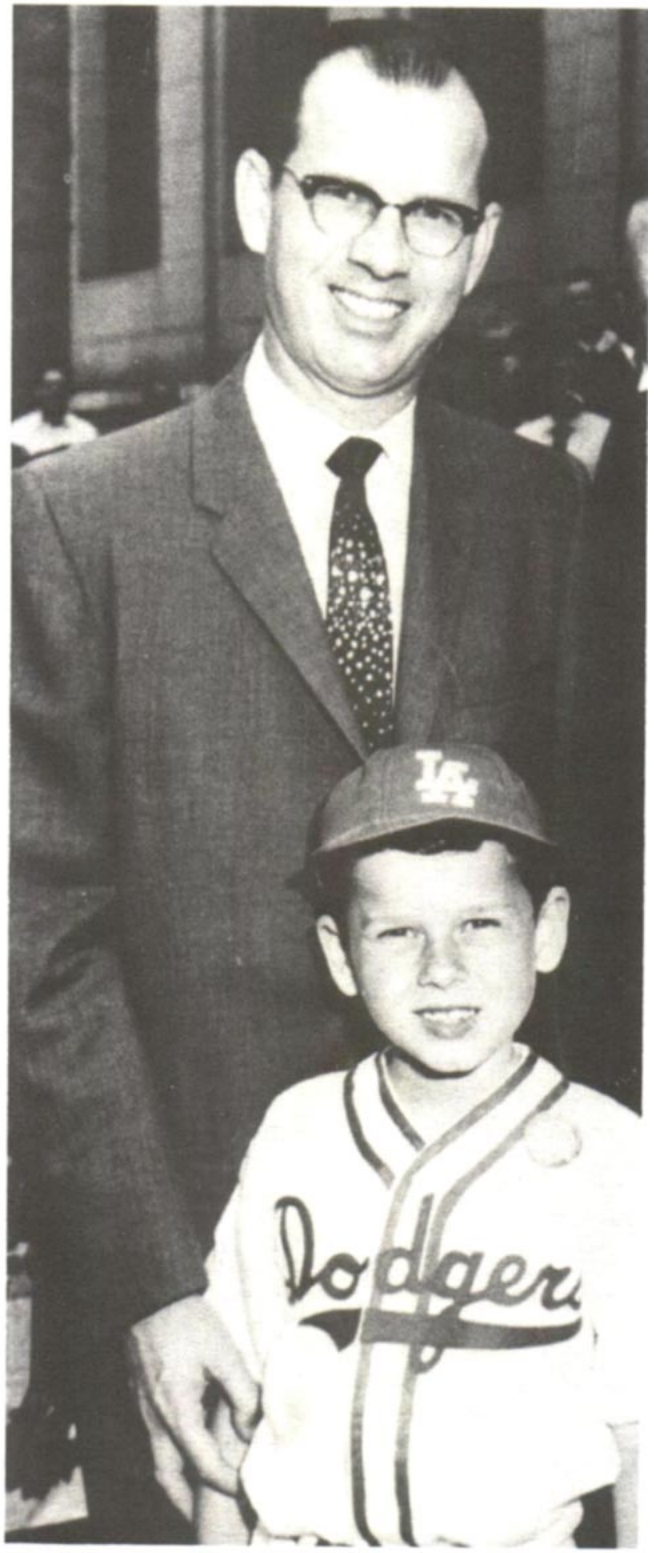

inal prosecution, civil action and property forfeiture.

The success of Hahn's news-making indicates he is defeating one of the hobgoblins that has plagued him since he entered public office: the charge that he is too low-key to generate media excitement. "Maybe I'm too cautious," admits Hahn about his approach to the press and publicity. "My father thinks I don't get enough publicity for what I've done. But he's backed off that criticism lately."

The senior Hahn makes no effort to hide his delight over Jimmy's political fortunes. Hahn, whose health has not fully returned since he suffered a stroke last year, thrives on his role as proud father. He orders visitors onto his balcony to see how he can wave to his son, enshrined in City Hall East just a few blocks away.

"My son is a brilliant lawyer," he brags. "I've known all the city attorneys since 1925. Jimmy's the best and the smartest."

It is no secret that the elder Hahn was the mastermind behind his son's political victories. In matters large and small, Hahn has been a dutiful adviser to his son. It was he who told Jimmy to stand in the middle of group pictures so as not to be cropped out by space-conscious newspapers. "Another tip was to get my arm in the middle," recalls the city attorney, "because newspapers don't like stray arms."

When the younger Hahn graduated from Pepperdine University (his father's alma mater) *magna cum laude*, his father suggested law school. And when Jim decided to run for office, it was dad who pointed him toward the office of controller.

At that time, Jim Hahn had spent four years as a deputy city attorney and four more in a private legal practice. His plan was to run for the city attorney's seat then being vacated by Burt Pines. But when word came that then-Controller (and present Los Angeles County D.A.) Ira Reiner wanted the job, the older Hahn took note. Leave city attorney for Reiner, he counseled, and go for controller instead.

Until then, the younger Hahn had not thought much about the controller's office. However, the idea took root. "I saw that Reiner had been a deputy city attorney, run for city attorney, lost, and then become controller. I figured that if he was qualified for controller, so was I."

Four years later, with Reiner moving on to the district attorney's office, Hahn was ready to tackle the city attorney position. Again, his father's assistance was crucial. This time Hahn faced tougher competition in the form of Lisa Specht, a well-connected attorney with the firm of Manatt, Phelps, Rothenberg, Tunney & Phillips who had the support of Congressmen Henry Waxman and Howard Berman and their Westside supporters.

The supervisor sprang into action, lining up hundreds of thousands of dollars in contributions and loans, and helping to persuade a last-minute drop-out from the campaign to throw his support behind Hahn. Not surprisingly, Hahn's largest margin of victory came from South Central Los Angeles — his father's traditional power base.

In Hahn's first victory speech, he attributed his election as controller to two factors: "My middle name Kenneth and my last name Hahn." But when he won the city attorney job, he was ready to take some credit himself. "I was running on my record," he told supporters. "People knew the difference between Supervisor Hahn and Jim Hahn."

If the Hahn name has gotten Jim Hahn where he is today, the inevitable comparisons with his father must get tiring. Kenny Hahn's extensive career, his flamboyance and enduring popularity would render most comparisons unflattering.

The older Hahn, a reform-minded maverick who once campaigned to ban loud ice cream trucks, won a seat on the Los Angeles City Council — at the age of 26. Five years later, in 1952, he was elected to the County Board of Supervisors. Since then he has spent the bulk of his political life railing against a Republican majority on the five-member county board. His innovations, which include the county's paramedics program and the emergency call boxes that line LA freeways, were mostly achieved by force of will. Only during a brief period in the '70s did Hahn's allies on the board outnumber his opponents.

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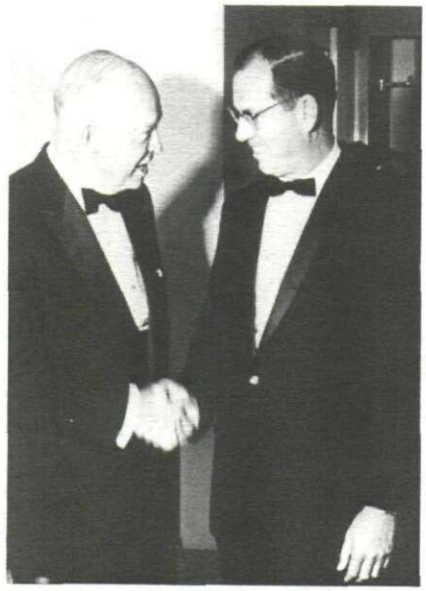
The Kenny Hahn photo album



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But if Hahn has few friends among his colleagues, his connection with his constituents is legendary. His staff members burst with anecdotes and other evidence of the community's love for their boss. His assistant chief deputy, Brad Pye, tells of a recent encounter with a Hahn supporter at a local radio station. "Black people will always vote for Kenny Hahn," she told him, "even if he's in a casket with one leg out."

Part of Hahn's secret is an obsession with constituent service. Last Memorial Day he dispersed his staff to the county parks to make sure "people were having fun." He attacks untrimmed trees and the state of public health with equal fury. But Hahn's most potent weapon may simply be that he's a nice guy. "He's warm, he's affable and got a ton of stories," says veteran Los Angeles political consultant Joe Cerrell. "He's very concerned about his constituents."

Hahn is also a committed publicity hog. Over the years, his office has churned out photos and releases at a daunting rate, giving him the highest visibility by far of the five supervisors. Large signs bearing his name announce public improvements he has helped along. Hahn has also given the area some of its most inspired publicity stunts, such as his current offer to pay $1 out of his own pocket for every pothole found in the unincorporated parts of his district.

These are big shoes for anyone to fill, and perhaps no one should have to attempt it. "It's difficult for anyone to duplicate Kenny Hahn, whether inside the family or outside," says Cerrell. "That particular style is very rare in a politican."

Indeed the two Hahns have decidedly different styles. While the younger Hahn may not be as exuberantly political as his father, he does exude a soft-spoken charm of his own that may well translate into votes. And, say observers, he's quickly learning the political ropes.

"Jim tends to be a little reserved, less gregarious (than his father)," says Los Angeles attorney Mickey Kantor. But, "He's done a good job so far of building his reputation. He obviously has a very bright future, but it's too early to say what it is and how far it will go."

If anything seems to be holding the younger Hahn down, it is a nagging doubt about his legal and administrative talents. He has been criticized for failing to back up his law enforcement themes with adequate staff and for picking legal battles — such as pornography — that are flashy but which he can't win. "He's not highly respected by other politicians," says one city hall insider who requested anonymity.

Hahn may also be hindered by the lingering impression that he is not yet his own man. The image of "little Jimmy Hahn" has died hard in city hall. Hahn says this was particularly so when he served as city controller. "Once I became city attorney, I wasn't 'little Jimmy Hahn' anymore," he says.

Hahn still refers to his father as "the real political power of the family," but he is beginning to build some clout of his own. In last year's city council race between former Council President Pat Russell and newcomer Ruth Galanter, Hahn parted company with his father, who endorsed the incumbent. Hahn threw his weight behind ultimately victorious Galanter, sending out a letter to South Central neighborhoods urging her election.

"I disagreed with dad on that," he says. "I tried to change his mind." He admits that some of the recipients of the mailer may have been confused about which Hahn the letter was from. But he adds, "When I ran for city attorney, people began to realize who I was."

Hahn has also taken steps to boost his media identity. His two-man press office, headed by former Los Angeles *Herald Examiner* political writer Mike Qualls, produces a steady stream of press releases on prosecutions, court convictions and consumer warnings. Further, his activism on gangs, drugs, pornography and other issues provide ample opportunities for talking to the press.

But perhaps Hahn's biggest coup was the recent hiring of John Emerson as his chief deputy. Emerson, a key player in Gary Hart's presidential campaigns, is viewed as an exceptionally shrewd lawyer and politician. "I would expect him to add tremendous sophistication to James Hahn's organization," says Kantor. Observers also expect Emerson to greatly expand Hahn's network of supporters and potential contributors.

As James Hahn builds his political machine, his father is gearing up for his ninth reelection campaign. This time, however, the effort is shadowed by questions about the supervisor's health, the wisdom of his running, his ability to complete a tenth term. The one question that no one seems concerned with is whether Hahn could win if he tried.

The health issue, however, is real, prompting the Los Angeles *Herald Examiner* to write an otherwise flattering editorial asking Hahn to step aside. The after-effects of Hahn's stroke have caused him to miss about half of the supervisors' meetings since returning to his duties last August. He gets around with the aid of a wheelchair and is visibly lacking in vigor.

Hahn's physical problems led to a nasty incident that reveals both a new vulnerability and the strength of his traditional support. At a recent public hearing, Hahn sought input to a proposal he had introduced to ban pit bulldogs from unincorporated parts of the county. Opponents to the ban used the opportunity to berate him as senile and as having outlived his value to the community.

The ugly attack sent supporters rushing to his defense, including a local talk radio station, KABC, which had editorialized against the ban. The station ran a second editorial, read by General Manager George Green, requesting listeners to write Hahn and distance themselves from the unpleasant remarks. "He is truly loved by his constituents" the editorial read, "and, as a matter of fact, by the person you're listening to right now."

Hahn's supporters publicly say they'll support him if he goes through with the reelection drive. Yet, some Black community leaders have asked him to reconsider his decision to run. Their fear is that he may not be able to complete the term, giving Governor George Deukmejian a chance to install a conservative appointee. Still, many Black leaders were there, cheering, when Hahn announced he would try and complete 40 years on the board.

The possibility that Hahn would retire set off a cascade of speculation about possible replacements. Among those mentioned as potential candidates are Democratic Congressman Julian Dixon of Inglewood, state Senator Diane Watson, Assemblywoman Maxine Waters, Los Angeles City Councilman Nate Holden and even Mayor Tom Bradley.

Does the younger Hahn, who now lives out of the district, harbor designs on his father's job? No, says the city attorney. "It's a great job, but I've taken a different path." If anything, Hahn says, he's looking at the district attorney's job, but only after the 1989 city attorney race is out of the way.

Someday, Kenny Hahn is going to retire. Hahn's retirement will delight conservatives, sadden liberals and close off a long and colorful chapter in the history of Los Angeles politics. What it probably won't do, however, is halt the career of his son.

"The name got him off the ground," observes Cerrell. "If his name was Jimmy Smith, he wouldn't be city attorney today. But I think Jimmy can take it from there."

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CALIFORNIA'S STEP-CHILDREN

Counties still hungry for state dollars

By Edward Iwata

In ancient Japan, the Samurai had a saying, "When the water rises, so does the boat." In other words, leaders of virtue who were troubled by great adversity would rise to face the crisis head-on, rather than fight among themselves and sink like dead weight.

Fast forward to California, the late 1980s. Many county officials, sick of gaping budget deficits and the rising costs of mandated state programs, are launching a defiant political revolt against their masters in Sacramento. In Butte County, Supervisor Hilda Wheeler suggests that rural counties secede and create a "51st state" to escape the demands of the Legislature. Trinity County Supervisor Dean Meyer arrives at a meeting bare-chested to show that counties are "losing their shirts" fiscally. County officials even try to lasso Clint Eastwood, the world's most famous mayor, into urging Governor George Deukmejian to fatten the pocketbooks of local governments.

While their rhetoric might not do a Samurai proud, county leaders finally seem to be making their point. After years of enduring fiscal neglect and second-class political treatment, California's counties appear to be gaining respect from the Legislature and from the governor's office. Sacramento isn't exactly lavishing the counties with new sources of money, but there is clearly a new awareness and recognition of their problems.

"When I first came to Sacramento, there were probably only seven or eight legislators who really understood what local government was all about," said Democratic Assemblyman Dominic Cortese, chairman of the Assembly Local Government Committee. "Most people were pretty ignorant; it was like speaking a foreign language. That has changed a lot. The dialogue now is very serious and down to earth. People are listening."

For the first time since Proposition 13 of 1978 hobbled many local governments, there is a growing feeling in the Capitol that counties are no longer "crying wolf" about their fiscal woes. For instance, it has been hard to ignore the plight of Shasta County, which was forced to close all its libraries last year. Or Tehama County, which often has no sheriff's deputies patrolling its 3000 square miles because they are too busy escorting prisoners to and from court and jail. It's even tougher for legislators to overlook powerful, heavily populated counties like Los Angeles, Fresno and Alameda, where deficits or shrinking budgets also are starting to hit home.

Continued on next page

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Lawmakers are realizing that yearly "bailout" bills are only stop-gap measures that dance around the problem. In fact, the Legislature passed two big bills at the end of the 1987 session that county leaders are touting as a first step toward long-term financial solutions for counties — especially poor rural counties hurt by budget deficits and dying local economies. One of the bills funneled $350 million in trial court funding to the counties, and the other gave them $110 million of bailout money.

"Three years ago," noted Dan Wall, a lobbyist for the County Supervisors Association of California, "we wouldn't have had a snowball's chance in hell of getting those bills through."

Moreover, county officials believe that Governor Deukmejian is now more receptive to the idea of granting counties a stable source of revenue, and is considering county financing proposals earlier in the budget process. Traditionally, counties have been forced to lobby furiously at the last minute to milk their share of funds from the budget.

"It's an important policy shift that the administration made counties part of its political program," said Peter Detwiler, a consultant for the Senate Local Government Committee. "In the past, it's always been only the counties' agenda or (Assemblyman) Jim Costa's agenda, and the administration would not negotiate seriously until the last two weeks of the session."

Counties also are making peace with powerful opponents. In August, for instance, county leaders joined forces with the California Trial Lawyers Association, a longtime nemesis, to back legislation that would sharply limit huge legal judgments against local governments.

"It's certainly been a watershed year," said Russ Gould, state chief deputy director of the Department of Finance and a Deukmejian loyalist. "We recognize where the relationship between the state and counties has gone sour, and we're trying to make improvements."

The Pollyannas in the county contingent predict that 1988 may turn out to be another milestone year in county-state relations. But a few pessimistic county supporters — weary from a decade of legislative fights — aren't ready yet to leap up and sing choruses of "Get Happy."

For starters, some skeptics in the counties' camp still mistrust the Deukmejian administration and its fiscal cautiousness. According to one theory, the governor decided to help the counties this past year as a public relations ploy and a token gesture of goodwill. "Frankly, it was becoming a political embarrassment to them, that they were Scrooges who never wanted to fund the counties," said one legislative source. "They thought, 'We're awash in cash this year, so why not kick over a few million extra to the counties?' Let's see what the governor does the next session."

The governor's major effort for counties in the upcoming fiscal year centers around full-financing of the bill by Democratic Senator Bill Lockyer of San Leandro giving $350 to $375 million to counties next year for their increasing criminal-justice costs. The counties, of course, were happy about the idea of the state picking up much of the tab for the courts. But they were enraged when Joe Gonsalves, a former assemblyman who is now a lobbyist for a group of small cities, worked quietly to add a provision to the bill giving cities with low or no property taxes up to $84 million from the counties' pot.

State lawmakers added another catch to this seeming fiscal bonanza. In return for the hefty trial-court bailout, counties must turn over to the state local court fines and forfeitures that they collect. Several angry counties claim they may end up losing more than they gain.

Bergeson

Cortese

The counties argue they need as much help as possible. For the upcoming budget year they will receive a $2.5 billion share of motor-vehicle fees, sales and cigarette taxes collected by the state — a small increase from last year's $2.4 billion. And they will receive $1.35 billion — compared to $1.3 billion last year — to run programs required by the state, such as sheriffs' departments, trial courts, hospital and welfare programs, according to budget analyst Jim Miller of the Department of Finance.

For some county officials, the old distrust of the state dies hard. Each year since Proposition 13 passed, they trooped to Sacramento, telling fiscal horror stories and begging for money. And each year, a reluctant Legislature bailed out the counties — after giving them stern lectures to pare their budgets.

Eight years ago, an apparent solution to the mess was found when a mechanism was set up to help repay local governments for the costs of state-related programs. In many cases, counties disagreed with the state's cost estimates for the programs, and the issue came before the Legislature. Not surprisingly, the lawmakers let the disputes die. Less than 10 percent of the 2800 appropriation bills to repay counties that came before the Assembly and Senate between 1975 and 1984 were passed, according to the California Taxpayers' Association.

Angry county leaders filed a lawsuit in 1981, charging that legislators were denying them money. Although the counties won in superior court, a state appellate court ruled four years later that county officials had not done enough to exhaust their administrative remedies, and they should pare their budgets even more. Steamed by the court ruling, the County Supervisors Association of California surveyed all 58 counties two years ago and made some startling "doomsday" findings.

The counties concluded the costs for state-mandated programs were far outpacing any revenue growth. All the counties were facing rising costs in welfare, jails and courts — the three major programs mandated by the state. Since 1979 the price tag for running the welfare and jail systems has soared 114 percent, and for the courts, 89 percent. Over the same period, money given by the state to the counties has risen by only 52 percent. Last year, county officials claim they spent more than 90 percent of their budgets — $13.7 billion — on state-related programs and matching funds.

Many counties, large and small, wrestled with budget deficits. Some rural and agricultural counties were forced to close fire stations, libraries and parks, cut back on sheriffs' deputies and neglect major road and infrastructure work.

"Our warnings over the years have been mostly ignored,

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and some California counties are now on the brink of bankruptcy," wrote Larry Naake, the executive director of CSAC, in a letter to Deukmejian last year.

"Counties are running out of options," confirmed Peter Schaafsma, a state legislative analyst. "They've been reducing levels of services and are in danger of violating state laws left and right."

In heavily forested Tehama County, 100 miles north of Sacramento, government officials say they may be the first county in California history to go broke. Flat-out, they know of no way to mend a projected deficit of $2.6 million in their budget of $33 million. Meanwhile, bridges are deteriorating and the welfare roll keeps growing.

Even large, growing counties are feeling the brunt of mandated state programs. Fresno County, despite its powerful agricultural base, has laid off 300 workers over the past three years. And Stanislaus County — flush with farming and cattle ranching, new housing tracts and the Gallo winery and Tri-Valley cannery — has been flooded by farm workers, Southeast Asian immigrants and poor migrants from the cities. Welfare costs have soared from $3 million to $19 million since 1982.

The results of a recent second survey by CSAC are more ominous, according to Naake. Every county in California this year reported that it is facing large budget shortfalls — the amount of money needed to maintain existing levels of services. "Rural counties are still in trouble, and now it's spreading to suburban and urban centers," said Naake.

The picture is made bleaker by the loss of $300 to $600 million from federal revenue sharing, liability-insurance cost increases and expensive criminal trials. Cities are taking big bites out of counties' tax revenues through redevelopment and annexations. And newly incorporated cities are also starting to compete for state money and local tax dollars.

Many feel that the fiscal problems and political conflicts can be traced to the constitutional power that the state holds over counties. It's a rocky, incestuous affair that Assemblyman Cortese wryly calls "that old paternalism." Lassen County Supervisor Jean Loubet put it more bluntly: "A county is nothing more than a child of the state. We don't trust each other, and for damn good reasons."

Kevin Bacon, a senior manager at Price Waterhouse who has studied local government financing, says, "There's a lot of antagonism both ways. Local politicians resent the state telling them how to run the courts and welfare. On the other hand, the state doesn't trust all counties to treat citizens the way they should be treated — that's why there are volumes of state laws governing how counties do business."

As "agents" of the state of California, counties must administer and partly pay for state programs as "providers of last resort" for poor and unemployed people who need public aid or medical care. The law is clear on that point. But the legal waters get murky when the mandated programs become so costly that some counties are tottering into red ink.

Several rebellious rural counties are confronting that issue head-on.

Last November, a dozen timber and agricultural counties in Northern California passed advisory measures urging the state to pay for all court and welfare costs. "Strike a blow for independent and solvent county government!" cried the ballots. In Butte County, angry government leaders and residents went further and passed a measure that slashed the funds the county pays for state-ordered programs back to 1978-79 levels.

When the state attorney general's office filed a lawsuit challenging the measure, Butte County Judge Reginald Watt agreed and ruled that it was unconstitutional. But he added a caveat: The state cannot order Butte County to run the welfare program unless the Legislature gives the county funding to do so. Otherwise, the judge warned in his opinion, "there is a real and present danger that ... the County of Butte will be reduced to little more than a puppet for the state of California."

While several court cases have covered state and local government financing, judges have skirted the broader issue of the legality of costly state-ordered programs, according to Judge Watt. He believes the Butte County lawsuit sets the stage for a "county versus state battle of the century."

Beyond the courtroom, some local government experts feel that the counties share a large part of the blame for the bickering. Some counties have split into factions, rather than lobbying as one strong voice, as cities and special districts do. More than one greedy county has clutched its bailout money and run, instead of staging a united fight for long-term answers. And rural counties in particular cannot afford that tactic, since they are woefully underrepresented in Sacramento.

Analysts also argue that some shortsighted county officials have failed to broaden their economies, lure new business to their regions and build up their sales tax bases. Many counties, they contend, would be in good shape if they had operated like a lean, mean business after Proposition 13.

County leaders, of course, retort that Proposition 13 wiped out their biggest wellspring of revenue — the property tax. And their next greatest source, the sales tax, is monopolized by the wealthier cities, which receive the lion's share of sales-tax revenues funneled through the state. Counties, they point out, do not have the power to raise taxes or impose fees without the consent of a fickle Legislature.

Much of the problem arises from the vast philosophical

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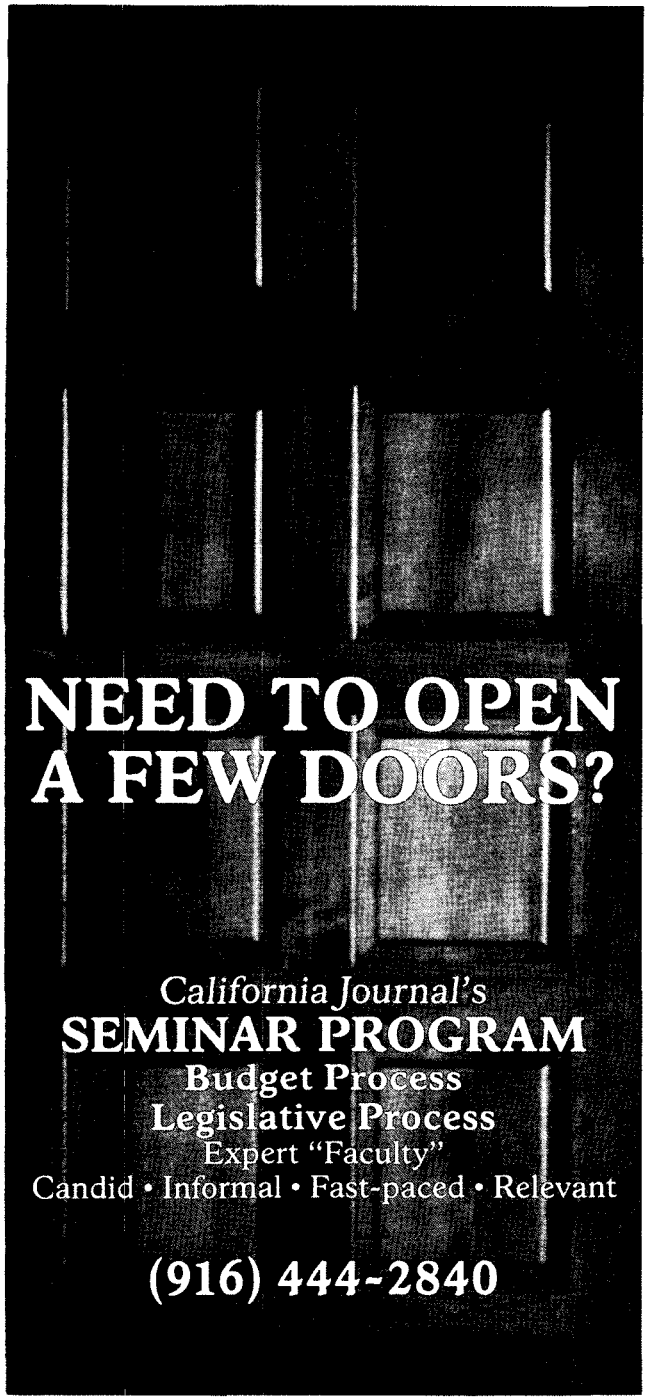

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differences between local government officials, who yearn to cut down on programs, and Governor Deukmejian, who hopes to decentralize state programs and shift them to counties. The welfare programs are a good example. The Aid to Families with Dependent Children program is funded mainly by the state and federal governments, and general assistance programs are paid fully by the counties. Many counties — especially rural counties with conservative political makeups — feel that the welfare system should be taken over entirely by the state. Governor Deukmejian strongly opposes that notion.

Nonetheless, the administration and legislators are working hard to meet the counties halfway.

Since 1984 the Legislature has given the counties hundreds of millions of dollars for road improvements, court block grants, unemployment insurance and other forms of bail-out relief. But the quick-fix measures only delay the inevitable. "It's like giving a dying man a reprieve," said Martin Nichols, county administrator for Butte County.

Looking for long-range answers, Cortese pushed through legislation in 1984 that permanently gave counties a greater portion of motor-vehicle fees. In the same vein, legislators have fiddled with raising the counties' share of the 6-cents sales tax from 1.25 cents to 1.5 cents.

In a victory for the counties last December, Democratic Assemblyman Jim Costa and state Senator Marian Bergeson, Republican chairwoman of the Senate Local Government Committee, won passage of a $110 million bailout bill — by far the largest in recent years. Most important, the bill carries a "stabilization" formula that will kick in and give counties up to $15 million if the costs of health and welfare programs outstrip a county's general funds.

"We need to have good formulas," said Bergeson. "If it's done on the basis of growth, obviously bigger counties like Los Angeles and San Francisco are going to benefit. If it's done on the basis of need, rural counties will be helped. Hopefully, we'll find a middle ground."

The Assembly, for the most part, has been kind to counties because of heavy lobbying by some Assembly members for bailout bills and new formulas. The Senate has been a bigger hurdle. This year, county officials hope to get a lot of help from Senator Robert Presley, a Riverside Democrat who last year replaced Senator Daniel Boatwright as head of the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee. Boatwright, a fiscal conservative who felt that local governments weren't cinching their belts enough, was a big obstacle to the counties' agenda. County officials expect Presley will be more receptive to their needs.

Perhaps the biggest trick, though, will be to return stronger taxation and fee-levying powers to the counties. Raising the banner of "home rule" and "local control," local governments have failed miserably to persuade the Legislature to grant them the broader power given to cities to raise revenues. And they'll probably have to wait a long time before anything happens. "There has got to be structural change," said Naake. "Counties need local, independent revenue sources similar to what they had prior to Prop 13. The whole view toward local governance has got to change."

To that end, Assembly Speaker Willie Brown has called for a committee made up of legislators, staff, private business people and educators to study the issues of state and local government relations and finance.

"I'm optimistic," said Cortese. "We're kind of starting a whole new era — the year of local government. More people realize long-term solutions have to be found, and we don't have a heckuva lot more time to do it."

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Sisyphus' Labors

Orange County Democrats hope for better times

By Tom Waldman

Richard Nixon was the best thing that ever happened to the Orange County Democratic Party. Ronald Reagan is the worst.

During the mid and late 1970s, when Watergate made all but the most thick-skinned Republicans question their choice of political party, affluent and staunchly conservative Orange County voted Democratic. In the three major elections (1974, 1976, 1978) that followed Nixon's resignation, Democrats captured and held a majority of legislative seats in the county. Basking in this new prosperity, leading Democrats allowed themselves to dream of a permanent political realignment in what for decades had been hostile territory. They did not forsee that Reagan would come along and ruin everything.

It says a great deal about Orange County that the fate of local Democratic candidates is closely tied to the popularity of Republican presidents. If the Republicans are losing elections, it's not necessarily because Democrats are doing something right.

Still, Orange County matters to the Democrats. With a population of two million, and vast amounts of personal wealth, the county is a gold mine of votes and dollars. In 1984 contributions from Orange County Democrats kept Gary Hart's fledgling presidential campaign alive through Iowa. That same year the county sent 19 delegates to the Democratic National Convention, which was an amount greater than that of many states. And it is a truism of California politics that when a Republican contender for statewide office carries Orange County by at least 150,000 votes, he or she wins the election.

Today the GOP has a 200,000-voter lead over the Democrats in Orange County. The Republican Party has an annual budget of $400,000; the Democrats just increased theirs to $80,000 per year. Even the most optimistic Democrats admit that it will be a long time before their party achieves anything close to political parity.

Eight years of Reagan have pushed the Democrats to the outer limits. In this county, unlike many other parts of the country, Reagan's success has translated into Republican victories right down the line. With the exception of Cecil Green, whose senatorial district lies mainly in Los Angeles County, every Orange County legislator and representative is a Republican. It took a mere eight years for the gains of the 1970s to be wiped out. One by one, the Republicans picked off seemingly invincible Democrats, such as Jerry Patterson and Richard Robinson. Faced with a president from the West who preached economic independence and contempt for Washington, the Democrats were helpless. "The party is at its lowest ebb," said Howard Adler, past Democratic Party chairman and current member of the State Central Committee.

The consequences of this are not only apparent on election night. Once again, Orange County Democrats brave enough to try the party circuit find themselves put on the defensive by cocky Republicans.

"It gets kind of tedious to go to cocktail parties where a person has to whisper that his or her spouse is a Democrat," said Sarah Catz, a Democratic fund raiser and activist. Richard O'Neill, owner of the Tiny Naylor's restaurant chain and a Democratic Party power in the county for 30 years, has seen this all before. "This is a social county, and Republican society is here," he said. O'Neill long ago made his peace with the Republicans; should any of them ask him to justify his choice of party, he explains that in the restaurant business "the only politicians who help are Democrats."

The GOP's hold on the social scene, along with its overrepresentation in such neighborly clubs as the Lion's and the Optimists, ensures the party increased support in terms of money and leaders. This is one of the major reasons Thomas A. Fuentes, chairman of the Republican Party of Orange County, is certain that GOP dominance will outlast Reagan. "Our support is people-based," he said, "not just business-based."

But just in case there is a problem, the Republicans are taking bold steps to secure their position. Sometimes this even means going after candidates in non-partisan races. Louise Adler, a member of the Saddleback Valley School

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Board, lost her bid for a third term last November after Republicans — spearheaded by their leaders in Sacramento — sent out a mailer urging the election of three candidates endorsed by Governor George Deukmejian. Adler, who had championed such cherished conservative principles as higher academic standards, suddenly had to answer for being a Democrat. She lost the election by a handful of votes. Her husband, Howard, the same man who is active with the party, remains very bitter over Ms. Adler's defeat. "A little cheap postcard can create that result," he said.

More to the point, the circumstances of Adler's loss indicate that Democrats have a long road to travel before they reach the promised land of political respectability. Merely calling yourself a Democrat in contemporary Orange County is enough to incur the wrath of voters. By comparison the problems of the national party seem tame; it has only to overcome the bad feelings left by Jimmy Carter and Walter Mondale. Orange County's Democrats must raise a lot more money, add a ton of new voters, and find excellent candidates.

Plus another thing: They have to hope, indeed pray, that the fortunes of the GOP will dramatically decline with the retirement of its star player.

To a person, Democratic leaders in Orange County remain convinced that Reagan and Reaganism crushed their party in the 1980s. They note that party affiliation in Orange County is not so strong that a great communicator can't come along and drastically alter the balance of power. The Republicans think this is hogwash. "We hear that kind of puff each year," said Fuentes.

The Democrats, though, are not so confident that they are simply waiting around for January 20, 1989. The Democratic Foundation of Orange County — revived four years ago — is probably the most important weapon the party has in its attempt to climb out of the cellar. Currently, the foundation has 100 members, many of them the sorts of young, rich professionals the Republicans have been grabbing left and right for the past 10 years. These people pay $1000 per year to talk politics and meet with the likes of Ted Kennedy and Richard Gephardt. As its leaders hoped, the foundation is a key source of funds for Democratic candidates; the group and individual members contributed a total of $750,000 in various races during 1986. The Orange County people recently exported the foundation concept to San Diego, another area where the Republicans dominate.

The foundation is part of Orange County's effort to take greater control of local party affairs. Sacramento has been a willing player in the past, but there is a sense among some key leaders in the county that certain areas have been neglected. John Hanna, chairman of the Orange County Democratic Party, intends to put more money into registering voters in the southern part of the county, where almost 70 percent of the electorate is Republican. Hanna believes that to write off this area as a lost cause is to guarantee it remains a GOP stronghold. He makes the additional point that for statewide candidates, a vote in San Juan Capistrano is as important as a vote in Watts.

At the same time, Orange County's Democratic leaders insist that the next reapportionment plan must be an improvement over the one passed in 1982. George T. Urch, executive director of the Orange County Democratic Party, said the last set of boundaries benefited Democratic-rich Los Angeles County at the expense of his area. "They took (Orange County) seats that were marginal and made them Republican," he said.

Michael Ray, a member of the foundation's board, would like to see a new congressional district that extends from Laguna Beach to Santa Ana, a distance of 20 miles. Ray is certain that Orange County will press its case for a generous map. "Just because we don't have somebody in Washington or Sacramento doesn't mean we don't have power," he said. "When it comes times for reapportionment, our voices will be heard."

Before that happens, Orange County's Democrats will have to make do with what they've got. They feel their best chance for an upset this year is in the 72nd Assembly District, where Richard Longshore won two years ago. The latest registration figures — 50 percent Democratic, 39 percent Republican — suggest that the Democrats have at least a fighting chance of defeating the incumbent. Urch is confident that the district's many Latinos — a group that usually stays away from the polls — will turn out in bigger numbers this year because of the presidential race. He also says it will take an excellent candidate and at least $500,000 to win. Sarah Catz has expressed a strong interest in running; she believes that the Democrats can successfully capitalize on day care and assistance for the homeless. Catz has also been advised to stay away from the no-growth issue that is so big in the county. The reason is that many of the top developers are Democrats.

Other than recapturing the 72nd, the party's big pitch in 1988 is voter registration. The leadership plans to spend between $50,000 and $60,000 on a concentrated effort throughout the county. Their enthusiasm is tempered by the realization that the Republicans can more than match any drive for votes, no matter how ambitious.

"We could spend $100,000 on registration and struggle to stay even with the Republicans," said party chairman Hanna.

Compounding the problem: Hiring kids to register new voters does not come cheap in Orange County where an unemployment rate of 3 percent makes for a highly competitive job market. The going rate to register voters in Orange County is $5 per person, which is $2 or $3 more than in other places.

Besides their party's comparative lack of money, Orange County's Democrats are also at a disadvantage in terms of demographics. The county simply does not have many of the traditional Democratic voting blocs included in its population. Blacks are almost non-existent (1.3 percent of the populace in 1980) and there are not many more Jews. Nearly 350,000 Latinos live in the county, but they have a history of non-involvement and find Reagan's positions on family issues appealing. The Southeast Asian immigrants are staunch anti-communists. More than perhaps anywhere else in America, Orange County's Democrats are going to have to sell their party to the White middle class. And that group has in large part turned away from the Democrats during the 1980s.

This is why the Democratic leadership is counting on the party to nominate a presidential candidate in 1988 who effectively taps into the fears and hopes of middle America. "If the national image of the party prospers, Orange County prospers," said Howard Adler. Urch is at least sure that the party won't repeat the mistakes of 1980 and 1984. "We can't do worse than Carter or Mondale," he said.

But even with a perfect nominee at the top of the ticket, Orange County's Democrats are still going to have great difficulty making inroads against an entrenched and confident Republican Party. What they can do is chip away at the edges — a friendly reapportionment plan here, a successful registration drive there — and the GOP will feel some heat. Of course, there is always the slim possibility that a Nixon-like figure will lead the Republicans down the road to political oblivion. Then all bets are off.

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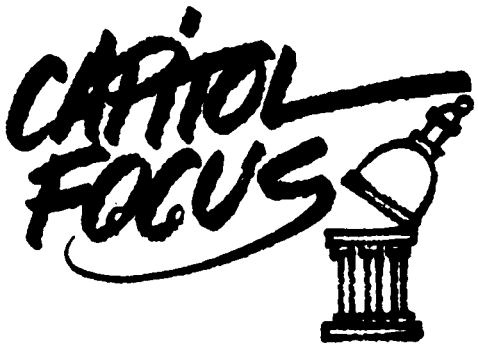

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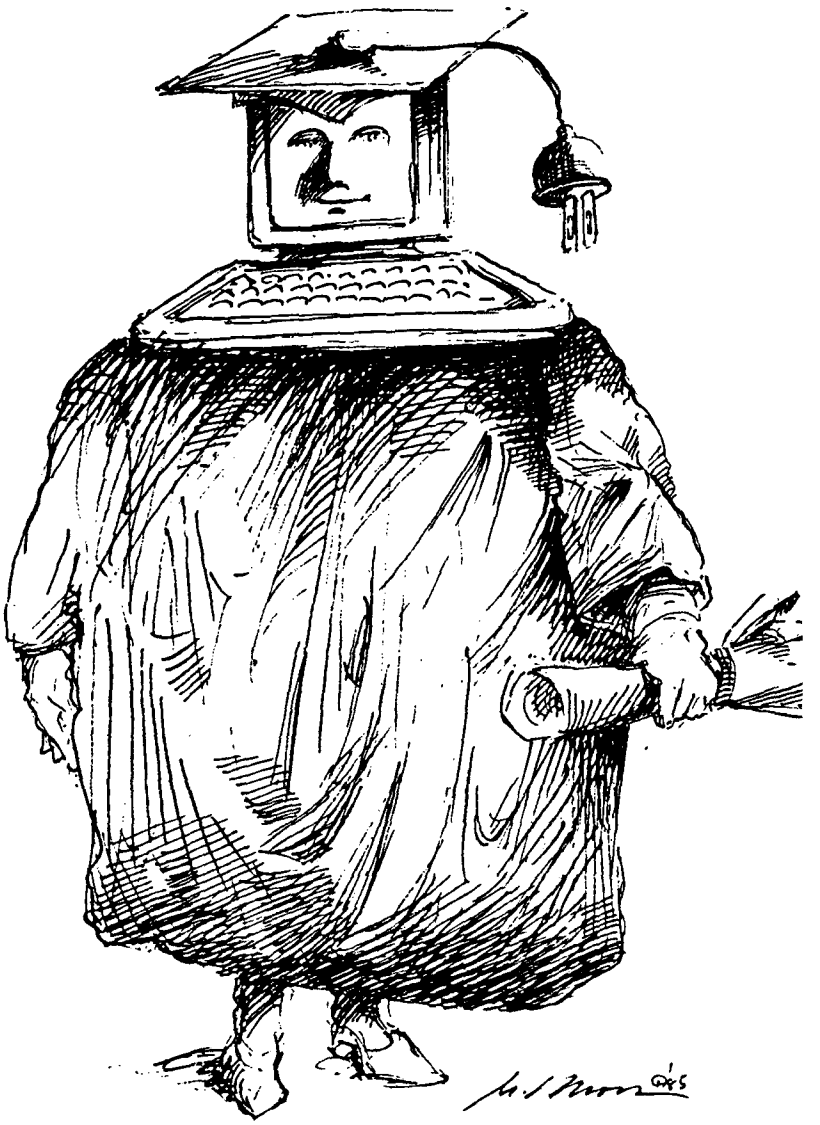
High-tech education

Moving toward the computerized classroom

By A.G. Block



The Oxnard classroom where Chris LaRose teaches science is a slice of what will be. It has no desks; just rows of tables, complete with recessed computer monitors, arranged like an underlined "v." A huge white slab of table glows at the front of the room, making the place look more like the set of a "Star Trek" episode than a junior high school classroom.

LaRose teaches in what has become known as "the smart classroom," a technologically-sophisticated environment filled with computers, robots, satellite dishes, video cameras and screens, and scads of software packages. The room marks a $120,000 investment for the Port Hueneme School District (plus thousands of dollars worth of time and equipment donated by suppliers anxious to open the market for high-tech education), but local school officials praise it as the classroom of the future.

Others characterize the "smart classroom" as an expensive, one-shot experiment that may or may not improve the learning skills of the students who use it.

Either way, Port Hueneme's investment is part of California's rush toward high-tech education, a rush that has been criticized in at least one report as being pell-mell and chaotic.

The computer and related high-tech innovations have been called the most valuable teachers' aids ever invented. Properly used, they can help motivate students, save administrative time for teachers, help teachers and counselors instantly evaluate the skills and learning capabilities of each student, and chart each student's progress, minute-by-minute if necessary.

The key phrase, however, is "properly used." At this point, not enough research has been done to determine how best to infuse high-tech into the classroom. Port Hueneme has one solution. The state Board of Education and Department of Education have established pilot programs in other school districts to study other solutions. As yet, basic questions have gone unanswered:

- How much planning is necessary before a school district starts spending money on high tech?
- How do teachers feel about California's gradual emersion in high-tech education, and how much teacher training and retraining is necessary to make teachers effective in the high-tech classroom?
- What are the best methods for integrating computers and other high-tech innovations into current curricula, and how much will the curriculum change to accommodate high-tech?
- What is the best way to deliver high-tech programs into the classroom without creating a statewide, electronic Tower of Babel, with each school buying computers and software independent of every other school?
- How may school districts best evaluate the quality of competing software to ensure the most bang for the buck?
- What kinds of subjects should be taught using computers, and how should they be taught?
- Does every student need to be exposed to high-tech learning at every grade level and at every school, and how much access to technology is needed to improve a student's learning skills?

Continued on next page

Freelance writer and consultant Charles Slaughter of Port Hueneme contributed to this story.

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"Traditional methods have taken us about as far as they can," said Ron Rescigno, Port Hueneme superintendent of schools. "New education technology, intelligently selected and properly used, does more for student learning than anything developed in the past hundred years."

"You can't just throw a bunch of money at one classroom, in one grade level," said Barbara O'Connor, chairwoman of the State Board of Education's Education Technology Committee, which doles out money to local school districts for high-tech investments. "We need to determine what constitutes better learning and integrate technology into that."

"We're not out to revolutionize the world," argued Rescigno. "We're out to educate Port Hueneme kids, and we don't think we're taking a chance."

Hueneme has been buying high-tech since 1982 when it first bought personal computers to teach remedial math to junior high students and computer literacy to sixth graders. While praising Hueneme's initiative and energy, O'Connor — a professor of communications studies at CSU, Sacramento — questioned the district's rush to spend money before studies are completed to determine how best to bring high-tech into the classroom.

"All these systems need to be tested," O'Connor said. That kind of testing is currently being done at five school districts throughout the state under a model test-site program sponsored by the Board of Education and its Ed Tech Committee. The program was established, O'Connor explained, to see how students learn and to judge the impact of high-tech on the learning process by tracking students throughout their academic careers — from elementary school, through junior high and on to senior high school.

The five districts ultimately chosen from among 37 applicants were Monterey, Alhambra, Cupertino, Sacramento, and Los Angeles Unified. Each district has been given a $500,000 grant each year for three years and may spend the money for both hardware, software and for training teachers to manage high-tech. At the end of four or five years, education officials hope to be able to answer basic questions about high-tech education and establish guidelines for districts that have not yet taken the plunge.

Education experts and some lawmakers feel those guidelines are essential to prevent districts from wasting money on technology that may prove inadequate to the task of educating students. According to a report presented this past January to the Assembly Committee on Economic Development and New Technologies, California's "well intentioned enthusiasm for the potential of technology" has led to problems by "spreading computer use too widely and inappropriate scheduling of students" without adequate data to confirm how best to integrate high-tech into the classroom.

Port Hueneme officials, on the other hand, think they've hit on the right combination with the "smart classroom." As a piece of work, the classroom is a 21st Century preview. Students work at one of three tables with recessed computer monitors and keyboards that slide out of drawers. Table space around the monitors provides a working area and simultaneous access to video screens. The monitors are plugged into a minicomputer that is loaded with science software and allows each student to work at his or her own pace. An encyclopedia is also available through the computer.

The front of the classroom is dominated by an 8-foot by 10-foot folding projection screen and 4-foot by 8-foot robotics table. To the right is a computer testing station for students and the teacher's electronic control center. To the left is the robot's control center. There is also a science demonstration table with a video camera and recorder mounted on it; three personal computers for more advanced students; and a bug-eyed projector that hangs from the center of the room.

The classroom also employs its own satellite dish — donated by its manufacturer — which can snatch science and educational programming out of the sky anytime during the broadcast day.

"This is not a lab situation," explained Rescigno. "This is a regular science classroom. That's hard for some people to understand. This is a complete integration of a teacher's delivery system with electronics. The curriculum is geared to the state curriculum, and the object is to free the teacher so she can work with the youngsters."

According to LaRose, the smart classroom focuses on teaching "higher-order thinking skills" such as evaluating, synthesizing, analyzing, and reasoning rather than traditional, low-order skills like recall and comprehension.

At the start of the school year, LaRose tests all 196 of her students (six periods), using the computer to help evaluate how each student learns. "That pretty much tells me where to start each of them," she says.

LaRose says she makes one teaching presentation to the entire class once every two weeks during which she introduces a unit, explains what will be covered and what is expected of the students. She then spends the rest of her time with individuals and small groups, asking questions, tutoring or engaging students in problem-solving discussions.

Students work on a basic science curriculum installed on the classroom's large computer. Software teaches basic objectives and covers seventh grade content prescribed by the California Science Framework. The content and reading levels range from grade four to 12, depending on the comprehension level of each student. The computer-assisted instruction interacts with students, allowing each to move at his or her own pace.

To provide variety, LaRose employs various problem-solving activities. She spices these presentations with laser disks, with a turtle-like robot that can be programmed to draw maps and grids on its large white table, with video tapes, and with satellite television programs. Some presentations go to the entire class, but most are directed to individual students or small groups. Thus, multiple activities go on at the same time.

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LaRose uses management software to determine an approach when certain students are not ready for advanced or higher-level material. Says LaRose: "At every stage I see what they need. I might pull (slower) students out to work in groups. I would hold small group discussions with them. I could put them on a laser disk program of the same information, the same objectives, presented in a slightly different way."

The computer helps LaRose track the progress of each pupil. "In a regular seventh grade room you don't have that student information when you need it," she says. "You will eventually get it, but it will be April by the time you figure it out. You need student attitude information: whether they need an authoritarian figure over them, if they work best by themselves, or if they're self-motivated. The computer gives me that information up-front."

She tracks of all these activities and information on a computer-managed system that gives her immediate, electronic "snapshots" of individuals, groups, or the entire class. That snapshot includes a detailed record of what every student has completed, how well each task was performed, and how long it took to perform it.

Although LaRose spent several months preparing to use the smart classroom, she feels that two weeks training will prepare any competent teacher to work there. And the payoff, according to LaRose, is more time for individualized instruction and counseling — "80 percent more" than traditional teachers, she says.

Irving E. Sigel, a senior research scientist for Educational Testing Services (ETS), says his research demonstrates that when teachers engage children in thought-provoking dialogues, rather than merely presenting them with facts, student thinking is stimulated and learning is enhanced.

Student performance may also be enhanced, although this is difficult to pin down. Don Cody, Port Hueneme testing coordinator, said that no perfect correlation exists between high-tech installations and test scores, although the district has seen improvement. "CAP scores do reflect a pattern of continuous improvement since we began installing computer labs," he said. "The greatest gains, 20 percent over four years, occurred in the elementary school with the longest installation time."

The Port Hueneme district, which has 7000 students in nine elementary and two junior high schools, first introduced high tech back in 1982 when the district brought in personal computers to teach remedial math in junior high and computer literacy to sixth graders. The next year, Hueneme took a huge high-tech plunge by installing minicomputer labs, complete with 30 monitors each, in four different schools. The labs were used for math, reading and language arts and cost about $60,000 each.

The district financed this high-tech binge by using state money that had been earmarked for capital improvements, by consolidating money meant for additional classroom materials and by spending School Improvement Plan (SIP) money. It also eliminated five teacher-aide positions.

Between 1984 and 1988, the district installed eight more labs in various schools, plus the smart classroom. The additional labs were for teaching such varied subjects as French, typing, algebra and geometry. The purchases were financed with SIP money, Lottery money and federal impact aid monies. Currently, each school in the district has a minicomputer lab.

Although district officials and many Port Hueneme parents are high for high-tech, some educators are sounding

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notes of caution. State Superintendent of Instruction Bill Honig, for example, says that the most sophisticated technology in the world is worthless unless it's used properly in the classroom. Honig hints that there is no consensus as yet on the proper mix of technology and live teaching and that the state must wait for results from the model programs before making heavy investments in hardware and software.

Honig also adds a caveat to the use of high-tech classrooms: "Technology is not going to replace the teacher. Teachers are vital for socialization and for guiding students in problem-solving by teaching them how to ask the computer questions."

Assemblyman Sam Farr, a Carmel Democrat who chairs the Assembly Committee on Economic Development and New Technologies, said there may be no perfect way to do high-tech and that each district may have to answer many questions for itself when it comes to integrating high tech into the classroom. But Farr points to the Monterey district's experience as how *not* to do it. "When they first tried to do it," Farr explained, "the district made decisions from the top down, and this didn't work."

According to Farr, district officials ran into opposition from teachers and principals when it tried to impose high-tech systems on the schools. But when the district got teachers involved at the beginning, staff was much more receptive.

Some Port Hueneme teachers have also expressed reservations about the smart classroom. One, who teaches elementary school, admires the smart classroom and agrees that high-tech teaching aids can benefit both teachers and students. But she warned that Port Hueneme's goal for eventually creating all "smart schools" may go too far. She said that some of her students don't deal well with computers, especially students who may have emotional problems.

"They don't have the focus to deal with computers," the teacher explained, adding that any student may have trouble dealing with computers all day long — as could happen in a "smart school."

"We shouldn't move ahead on this too fast without seeing exactly how well it works," she said. "Computers reduce a lot of tedious clerical work for teachers, especially when it comes to correcting tests, but a lot of kids need feedback from a teacher rather than from a computer."

This approach echoes the state Board of Education's policy: study many options and results first, then begin a systematic approach to integrating high-tech into the classroom.

The Port Hueneme teacher's union also hasn't taken a formal position regarding the smart classroom or educational technology. Rick Ulman, local president, said his membership is divided; some pro, some con. Some members fear that computer labs will lead to doubled class sizes with teachers still accountable for teaching all the skills computers can't, such as socialization skills.

Another Port Hueneme union leader said district teachers are proud of the district's courage for taking bold steps using technology. "Existing labs are well regarded and we hope the smart classroom will be equally successful. The union is for technology, but we expect results to justify expansion." He said the union wasn't involved in developing the smart classroom, and most district teachers would like to know more about it. The union is concerned that people may begin to think that teachers can be replaced by a monitor and a machine.

"We don't want to see computers take the passion out of teaching ... Students will always need good teachers to make the subject come alive."

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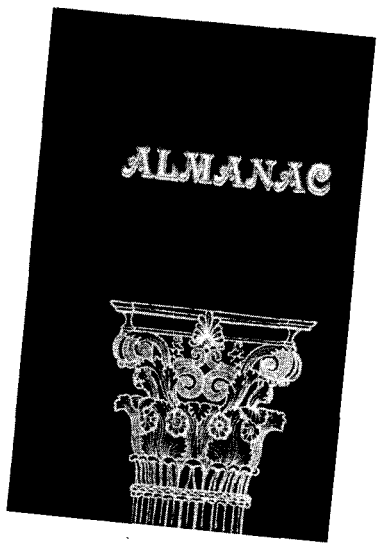

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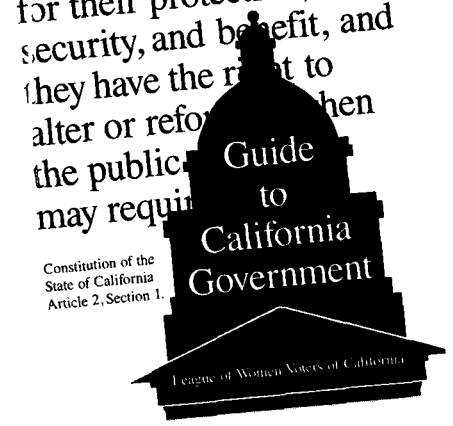
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A roundup of statewide initiative proposals. All statutes require 372,145 valid signatures; constitutional amendments require 595,485. In parentheses is the deadline for sponsors to submit signatures to county clerks, and the issue of California Journal *that contains a full explanation of each measure. Regardless of the date shown, signatures should be submitted by April 6, 1988, for any measure to qualify for the November 1988 ballot.*

New in circulation:

NUCLEAR POWER PLANT EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS — an initiative statute, sponsored by Ben Davis Jr. of Broderick, that would prohibit state and local agencies from developing, financing or implementing emergency response plans designed to mitigate the consequences of a serious accident at any of the state's 50-megawatt-or-more nuclear power plants. The measure is significant because the Nuclear Regulatory Commission requires such a plan for a nuclear plant to begin or continue operation. (June 6th)

SCHOOL FUNDING — an initiative consitutional amendment, sponsored by California Teachers Association President Ed Foglia, that would establish a minimum level of state funding for school and community districts. These districts, with specified limits, would receive all state revenues in excess of the state appropriations limit and exempt those funds from the limit. Among other provisions, the measure restricts how districts may use the funds. (June 6th)

CRIMINAL LAW — an initiative constitutional amendment, sponsored by Republican state Senators Ed Davis of Northridge and Ed Royce of Anaheim, GOP Assemblyman Ross Johnson of Fullerton, Kern County District Attorney Ed Jagels, Robert Henderson, Anthony Rackauckas, Sterling Norris, Richard Riordan, and Doris Tate. Among other provisions, the measure directs California courts to give criminal defendants no greater rights than those afforded by the federal Constitution, prohibits post-indictment preliminary hearings, expands the definition of first-degree murder, expands special-circumstance murders subject to the death penalty, and increases the maximum punishment for minors convicted of first-degree murder to life without the possibility of parole. (June 6th)

INSURANCE RATES AND REGULATION — an initiative statute, sponsored by Harvey Rosenfield of Santa Monica, that would regulate the way auto and other property-casualty insurance rates are established. Among other provisions, the measure would require that insurance rates be lowered by 20 percent from the November 1987 levels and frozen until November 8, 1989, unless an insurance company could prove it was on the verge of insolvency. The measure also provides that the state insurance commissioner be an elected official and that auto-insurance premiums be determined by a driver's record and number of miles driven, with discounts for good drivers. (June 9th)

LONG TERM HEALTH CARE — an initiative constitutional amendment, sponsored by Janet Levy of Sacramento, would create a program to make health and long-term care plans available to California residents. The program would be funded from a .5 percent sales and use tax, with 75 percent allocated for long-term care and 25 percent for other medical programs. (June 17th)

EDUCATION TAX CREDIT — an initiative statute, sponsored by Manuel Klausner of Californians for Quality Education (Encinitas), that grants state income-tax credits for the costs of instruction, textbooks or transportation on behalf of students attending kindergarten through 12th grade in public and most private schools in California. (June 23rd)

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE; GOOD DRIVER PREMIUMS — an initiative statute, sponsored by J. Gary Gwilliam of Oakland, that requires that auto insurance premiums be based primarily on a person's driving record; that 25 percent premium reductions be made for drivers with good driving records; and that proof of financial responsibility be provided upon vehicle registration. Among other provisions, driving privileges would be suspended for any person under the age of 21 who was convicted of alcohol or controlled-substance-related driving offenses. (June 24th)

MOTOR VEHICLE AND OTHER INSURANCE — an initiative statute, sponsored by Stanley Zax of Beverly Hills, that establishes no-fault insurance coverage for medical expenses, lost wages and funeral expenses resulting from auto accident injuries. Among its other provisions, accident victims could recover from the responsible party only when injuries resulted in death, permanent disfigurement, or permanent to the point that the injured party could no longer resume an active and normal lifestyle. (June 24th)

TAX CREDIT. AIDS RESEARCH FUND — an initiative statute, sponsored by state Controller Gray Davis and California AIDS Advisory Committee member Bruce Decker, that would create an AIDS Research Trust Board consisting of 11 members (state controller, secretary of the Health and Welfare Agency, as well as representatives of the University of California, health and life insurance industry, among others). The board would promote coordinated AIDS research and administer a trust fund financed by a state income-tax credit. (July 5th)

MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT CLAIM REIMBURSEMENT FUND — an initiative statute, sponsored by James Wheaton of the Center for Public Interest Law, would create a fund to pay certain motor vehicle accident claims on a no-fault basis after January 1, 1990. The fund would be supported by fees assessed against traffic violators and from a premium fee collected each year from vehicle registrations. The measure, which sets maximum reimbursement levels, also provides for regulation of some insurance rates, limits tort liability for certain claims and subjects insurers to antitrust laws. (July 5th)

Continuing in circulation:

DISABILITY BENEFITS — an initiative constitutional amendment, sponsored by Kevin McCarthy of Santa Rosa. (March 7th; December 1987 *CJ*)

INSURANCE REGULATION — an initiative statute, sponsored by Adam Burton of Los Angeles. (March 7th; December 1987 *CJ*)

BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE POLICY — an initiative statute, sponsored by Russell Oertel of Claremont. (March 21st; December 1987 *CJ*)

REAPPORTIONMENT — an initiative constitutional amendment, sponsored by Republican Congressman William Dannemeyer of Fullerton. (March 28th; December 1987 *CJ*)

NUCLEAR POWER — an initiative statute, sponsored by Ben Davis Jr. of Broderick. (March 28th; December 1987 *CJ*)

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES — an initiative statute, sponsored by Joseph Viducich of Beverly Hills. (April 18th; January 1988 *CJ*)

AIDS TESTING — an initiative statute, sponsored by Los Angeles County Sheriff Sherman Block. (April 18th; January 1988 *CJ*)

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HOUSING AND NUTRITIONAL ASSISTANCE — an initiative statute, sponsored by Board of Equalization Chairman Conway Collis. (April 21st; January 1988 *CJ*)

CIGARETTE AND TOBACCO TAX — an initiative constitutional amendment and statute, sponsored by Neil Andrews and Carolyn Martin of the Coalition for a Healthy California. (May 2nd; February 1988 *CJ*)

FIREARMS OWNERSHIP — an initiative constitutional amendment, sponsored by Carl Murphy of Lompoc and Bernadine Smith of Hanford. (May 2nd February 1988 *CJ*; February 1988 SCJS)

CAL-OSHA — an initiative statute, sponsored by John Henning of the California Labor Federation (May 2nd; February 1988 *CJ*)

OATH OF OFFICE — an initiative constitutional amendment — sponsored by Tony Avila Sampson, Floyd Sampson, Rose Sampson, William Sampson and Howard Sampson of Petaluma. (May 9th; February 1988 *CJ*)

TERMINAL ILLNESS — an initiative statute, sponsored by Robert Risley of Los Angeles. (May 9th; February 1988 *CJ*)

JUDICIAL ORGANIZATION — an initiative constitutional amendment, sponsored by James Schwander of People for Legal Justice. (May 16th; February 1988 *CJ*)

HOUSING ASSISTANCE BONDS — an initiative statute, sponsored by Marcus Brown Jr. of the California Coalition for Rural Housing. (May 16th; February 1988 *CJ*)

AIDS REPORTING — an initiative statute, sponsored by Republican Congressmar William Dannemeyer of Fullerton and Dr. Lawrence McNamee of the California Physicians for a Logical AIDS Response. (May 16th; February 1988 *CJ*)

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES; 'TIED HOUSE' LAWS — an initiative statute, sponsored by Jeremiah Hallisey of San Francisco. (May 16th; February 1988 *CJ*)

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE TAX — an initiative statute, sponsored by Los Angeles County Supervisor Ed Edelman. (May 19th; February 1988 *CJ*)

DISCLOSURE — an initiative statute, sponsored by Jim Rogers of Oakland (May 23rd; February 1988 *CJ*)

MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE — an initiative statute, sponsored by Democratic Assemblyman Richard Polanco of Los Angeles. (May 26th; February 1988 *CJ*)

Qualified for June 1988 ballot:

AIDS — an initiative statute, sponsored by Brian Lantz and Khushro Ghandi of Livermore, that will, if adopted, declare AIDS an infectious, contagious and communicable disease. It will require Department of Health Services personnel and all health officers to fulfill duties and obligations outlined in specific statutes and regulations to protect the public. This proposal is sponsored by proponents of, and is similar to, Proposition 64, which was defeated during the November 1986 election.

CAMPAIGN FUNDING — an initiative statute, sponsored by Walter Gerken and by California Common Cause, that will, if approved by voters, set limits on contributions and loans that could be made or accepted for legislative offices and establish a Campaign Reform Fund to which taxpayers could designate up to $3 annually from income taxes paid. Some matching funds could be made from this Fund to qualified candidates.

CAMPAIGN FUNDING — an initiative statute, sponsored by independent state Senator Quentin Kopp of San Francisco, Democratic state Senator Joseph Montoya of Whittier and Republican Assemblyman Ross Johnson of Fullerton. If adopted, the measure will limit political contributions to a candidate to $1000 from each person; $2500 from each political committee; $5000 from a political party or "broad-based" political committee. It would also limit honoraria for elected officials to $1000 per year from any one single source and prohibits transfers of campaign funds between candidates.

WILDLIFE, COASTAL, AND PARK LAND CONSERVATION BOND ACT — an initiative statute, sponsored by Californians for Parks & Wildlife, that will, if approved, authorize a general obligation bond issue of $776,000,000 for acquisition, development, rehabilitation, protection, or restoration of park, wildlife, coastal and natural lands in California.

STATE AND LOCAL APPROPRIATIONS LIMIT ADJUSTMENT — an initiative constitutional amendment, sponsored by a coalition of the League of Women Voters, California Teachers Association and Peace Officers Research Association of California. If approved, the measure will redefine the base for calculating expenditure adjustments (the Gann limit) to be the greater of the change in California Consumer Price Index or California per capita personal income. "State population" will also be redefined to include increases in K-12 or community college average daily attendance in excess of the percentage growth in state population. Motor vehicle fuel taxes would be exempt from the limit.

EMERGENCY RESERVE; DEDICATION OF CERTAIN TAXES TO TRANSPORTATION; APPROPRIATION LIMIT CHANGE — an initiative constitutional amendment, sponsored by Paul Gann of Carmichael, that will, if approved, require that 3 percent of the total state general fund budget be included in the budget reserve and that net revenues from motor vehicle sales and use taxes be used only for streets, highways and mass-transit guideways. Reserve and fuel revenues would be exempt from the state appropriations limit.

Submitted by the Legislature:

CITIES, COUNTIES AND DISTRICTS; LOCAL AGENCY FINANCING — authorizes the state treasurer to issue revenue bonds on behalf of the state for financing construction of the Superconducting Super Collider in California. (McCorquodale)

COUNTY OFFICERS; ASSESSOR; ELECTION — requires that the office of county assessor be elective in chartered and general law counties. (Keene)

SECOND DEGREE MURDER — increases the penalty for second-degree murder to imprisonment in state prison for 25 years to life where the victim was a police officer engaged in the performance of duties. (Presley)

Failed to qualify:

TRANSPORTATION REVENUE — an initiative constitutional amendment, sponsored by Republican Assemblywoman Doris Allen of Cypress. (September 1987 *CJ*)

STATE INCOME TAX REBATE — an initiative statute, sponosred by Republican Assemblymen Tom McClintock of Newbury Park and Richard Mountjoy of Monrovia and Republican state Senator Don Rogers of Bakersfield. (October 1987 *CJ*)

LIMITS ON TORT CLAIMS AND ATTORNEY FEES — an initiative constitutional amendment, sponsored by Gene Livingston and former Deukmejian cabinet official Kirk West of Sacramento. Sponsors did not actively pursue this initiative. (November 1987 *CJ*)

CAMPAIGN FINANCING — an initiative statute, sponsored by Republican Congressman William Thomas of Bakersfield and former Fair Political Practices Commission Chairman Dan Stanford of Solana Beach. (January 29th; October 1987 *CJ*)

Source: Secretary of State's office

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WASHINGTON PERSPECTIVE

By LARRY LIEBERT

On the hustings

Like Sacramento, Washington fancies itself the center of a political universe. It's an odd feeling in election years, when the attention and the gossip and, ultimately, the decision-making power flow off to the precincts where votes are cast.

SUDDENLY, THE DEBATE OVER BUDGET deficits and aid to the Contras is being waged in Iowa and New Hampshire and South Carolina and Texas, not just within the few blocks between the White House and the Capitol.

The change of political venues was vividly demonstrated in January, when President Ronald Reagan delivered his final State of the Union address to Congress. It was a proud recital of all Reagan had accomplished — and a stale rehash of all of his unsuccessful pet projects (the line-item veto of spending measures, a constitutional ban on abortion) that stand even less chance of passage during this lame-duck year than they did during the prime of his presidency.

For the next few days, the nation's attention was riveted not on Reagan's predictable oratory but on a non-event that happened a few hours earlier — the shouting match Vice President George Bush and anchorman Dan Rather engaged in on the "CBS Evening News." Even the president took time out to watch a videotaped replay of that bit of political theater.

For the presidential candidates, Washington in an election year becomes little more than a stage setting for occasional campaign stops. Representative Richard Gephardt, the Missouri Democrat, rushed back from Iowa a few weeks ago to "lead the fight" against Reagan's request for aid to the Contras fighting Nicaragua's leftist regime. His visible role in the debate, arranged by House Democratic leaders backing his campaign, caused some snickering on the part of colleagues who had not remembered him expressing much passion on the issue before election year arrived.

Of course, there are still platoons of political insiders stationed in Washington during this election year — members of Congress and their staffs, lobbyists, political strategists who work out of campaign headquarters, reporters who are not on the campaign trail. They develop a powerful appetite for information from the hustings.

That's where the Presidential Campaign Hotline has come in. A group of political consultants, including Republican Doug Bailey and Democrats Ron Rosenblith and Roger Craver, put together this computerized version of a *Reader's Digest* for political junkies.

Every morning, political types in Washington and around the country hook up their PCs to the Hotline computer in the Washington suburb of McLean, Virginia, and download a chewed-over version of campaign headlines and datelines. Every evening, campaign press agents and political reporters looking to promote their own stuff upload their day's work into the same computer for use in the next day's Hotline.

It's not exactly great prose, but it's the stuff political speculation is made of. A sample item on Texas politics that ran a while ago:

"Today's *Miami Herald* quotes Houston analyst Gary Pearson: 'If you want to win, you've got to buy television time in 19 different media markets to cover this state.' Possible cost for a late saturation TV buy: $400,000 to $500,000. Dukakis, with an Austin headquarters and six outposts, 'may be the best organized.' One campaign aide says Gore will get the endorsements and Jackson the applause, but Dukakis' money, organization and free media after N.H. win will give him the delegates. UPI (2-4) reports du Pont, Haig, and Kemp say they'll attend a Houston Conservative Action Conference debate nine days before Super Tuesday, Bush won't and Dole has not committed one way or another."

For such stuff, political action committees pay $350 a month, newspapers $250 and non-profit groups $150. "We're very pleased with the extent to which people are tapping in," said Will Saletan, editor of the Hotline. "There was a need out there and nobody was filling it."

It is an ephemeral need, however. The Hotline's publishers plan to turn it into a "Presidential Transition Hotline" after November, then look for other political/governmental grist for their mill after that.

For this political reporter, an occasional week back in from the campaign trail is an opportunity not only to do my laundry and see my family but also to catch up on California happenings in Washington. Bumping in to Senator Alan Cranston, for example, provided a chance to notice his brand new pair of hearing aids. According to an aide, the 73-year-old Democrat got outfitted with the devices because "I got tired of asking, 'What?'" Cranston is in good political company — President Reagan keeps a pair of hearing aids nestled in his ears these days — but the devices are likely to spur renewed whispers about the senator's advancing age.

Those who think Cranston might be prepared to retire when his term ends in 1992, however, may be forgetting his almost religious belief in the power of nutrition and exercise to extend life. He still runs sprints in the morning and works out an hour each day in the Senate gym.

ON THE OTHER HAND, Cranston might be excused if he turns off his new hearing aids during Senate speeches by his Republican colleague from California — Pete Wilson. It's not that Wilson gives some of the worst speeches on Capitol Hill, it's that he has one of the worst styles of delivering them.

Wilson, who has a way of editing his every remark a split second before he says it, has an irritating habit of sounding slightly out of synch. The result is that he sounds like a simultaneous translator struggling to convert the remarks of some visiting Rumanian.

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